

STARS AND STRIPES®

Texas looking for respect in Rose Bowl

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Texas running back Cedric Benson



'Soft adventures' a new trend in Europe travel

Travel magazine inside



Toby

Mannheim couple's blind mutt wins big

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Volume 63, No. 256 © SS 2004 G

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2004

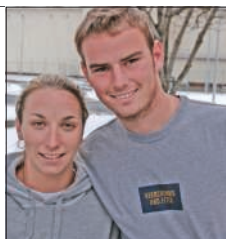
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Relief begins arriving in devastated Asian nations

Death toll from tsunami, quake nears 77,000 Pages 9-10



Courtesy of Chad Shelby



JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

'We're so lucky,' say airman, wife caught in tsunami

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Megan Shelby and Airman 1st Class Chad Shelby, above right, were preparing to go scuba diving during their honeymoon at Patong Beach, Thailand, on Sunday when a deadly tsunami struck. Above: Their scuba diving instructor stands by what remains of the scuba shack where the Shelseys were sitting as the waves began rolling in and ripped the shack apart. Chad Shelby is stationed at Misawa Air Base, Japan.

STARS & STRIPES

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Slain deer hunters case: A man accused of shooting six fellow deer hunters to death and wounding two others after being caught trespassing in the woods pleaded not guilty Wednesday.

Chai Soan Vang, 36, waived his right to a preliminary hearing and will stand trial on six counts of murder and three of attempted murder. A judge set a trial date of Sept. 12. Vang has suggested he acted in self-defense and feared for his life, telling investigators the victims fired a shot at him first and berated him with racist slurs.

N.Y. terror trial: A prosecutor told a federal jury Wednesday that the terrorism case against a Manhattan lawyer and two others was essentially about "a jailbreak" in which they helped an imprisoned terrorist feed deadly messages to followers.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew Denber in his closing argument painted all three defendants with the same brush, saying they let blind Egyptian Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman communicate with overseas terrorists despite prison rules imposed to isolate him.

He asked the jury to convict attorney Lynne Stewart, U.S. postal employee Ahmed Abdel Sattar and Arabic translator Mohamed Yousry in a conspiracy to overcome the government's effort to silence the still "powerful and influential" sheik.

US Airways problems: US Airways is trying to recruit volunteers willing to work for free over the New Year's weekend at Philadelphia's airport in order to avoid a repeat of a Christmas fiasco that left the struggling airline with too few workers to fly its planes and process baggage. The request seeks workers only at Philadelphia.

While the volunteers will not be paid for extra shifts, employees will be paid for regularly scheduled work, US Airways spokesman David Castelveter emphasized Wednesday. Company executives and managers would be taking part in the volunteer program, he said.

Slain pregnant woman: A federal magistrate Tuesday appointed public defenders to represent Lisa M. Montgomery on a charge that she kidnapped a fetus from a pregnant woman and left the mother dead.

Montgomery, 36, made her first appearance in a federal courtroom downtown and spoke barely above a whisper as she answered a few questions from Chief U.S. Magistrate Judge John T. Maughmer.

Maughmer told Montgomery that he had asked two lawyers from the public defender's office to attend the hearing in anticipation that she may need court-appointed legal counsel. He told her he would not ask for a plea on accusations against her but



Stone for Jesus' brother: The ossuary that reputedly held the bones of James, Jesus' brother, that was discovered in Israel appears to be forged. Israeli police indicted four antiquities collectors and dealers Wednesday, accusing them of running a sophisticated forgery ring that created a trove of fake biblical artifacts, including some hailed as among the most important archaeological objects ever uncovered in the region.

wanted to know if she was aware of the charges. "Yes," she said quietly, acknowledging the accusations of the crime.

FBI counterterrorism chief: FBI Director Robert Mueller on Tuesday named Willie T. Hulon to lead the agency's counterterrorism division, the sixth person to hold the high-profile job since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Hulon, a native of Memphis, Tenn., has been a senior counterterrorism official since April after a two-year stint as head of the FBI's field office in Detroit. Hulon was cleared in February of any wrongdoing after an internal investigation found that three Detroit-area men had falsely accused him of leaking sensitive information to drug dealers.

War on terrorism

Chirac official probe: State prosecutors began a probe Wednesday into suspected wrongdoing by a maverick lawmaker from President Jacques Chirac's party for his failed effort to free two French reporters taken hostage in Iraq, judicial officials said.

The investigation of Didier Julia, a lawmaker from the conservative Union for a Popular Movement party, and two alleged associates centers on suspicions that they shared intelligence with a foreign power or group, the officials said on condition of anonymity.

On Tuesday, investigators questioned Julia associates Philippe Brett and Philippe Evanno over their roles in the initiative. They were expected to be placed under investigation — one step short of being formally charged — the officials said.

World

Iran elections: Iran's biggest reform party has chosen a former Cabinet minister

as its candidate in the upcoming elections for a successor to President Mohammad Khatami.

Mostafa Moin, a close Khatami ally and former science and technology minister, was the sole candidate of the Islamic Iran Participation Front, though other reformist groups may have their own candidates, party leader Saeed Shariati said Wednesday. Moin officially accepted the nomination Monday.

Ukraine election dispute: Noisy, orange-clad opposition protesters on Wednesday blocked Ukraine's government headquarters and prevented Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich from convening a Cabinet session.

Irina Lohanova, a spokeswoman for the Cabinet, said that the meeting would not be held as planned — a decision that prompted the protesters to start abandoning their barricade, which winning presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko ordered Tuesday night to keep up pressure on his rival, who has refused to concede.

Yanukovich also said Wednesday that he would not bow to opposition pressure and resign from his post.

Afghanistan reform: Afghanistan's new defense minister praised his warlord predecessor and pledged to work hard to create a professional national army seen as a key to establishing long-term stability in a nation still reeling on regional strongmen and international troops.

Abdul Rahim Wardak said Afghanistan's National Army, or ANA, needed educated and professional officers to eventually take over security of the vast mountainous country.

Wardak said an ongoing drive to disarm private militias will be completed by March 2005, ahead of parliamentary elections scheduled for April.

Stories and photos from wire services

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Blind Mannheim pooch named top dog

BY CHARLIE COON
Stars and Stripes

The mutt was covered with frost and grime and had a mouthful of broken teeth. There were empty red spots where its eyes should have been.

It was led into the animal shelter by a man using a horse rope. He'd found the dog wandering in a frozen field.

"It was a horror when we first saw him," said Paige Eichmann, who worked at the shelter in Virginia. "When you work at a shelter, you see a lot. We'd thought someone had poked his eyes out. It was very upsetting."

The dog spent a month on doggy desert row, simpering and chewing on his cage, little tears trickling from empty eye sockets. Would-be adopters recoiled at the sight of the mangy mutt.

So can we say it? Heck, yeah. Every dog has his day.

Toby, now the adopted son of Army Maj. Mark and Paige Eich-

elman of Mannheim, Germany, has been voted the 2004 Great American Mutt.

The border collie mix was picked from 1,506 mutts entered in a contest sponsored by Tails in Need Inc., a New York City-based foundation that seeks to raise education on adoption of animals. Judges narrowed the field to 12 semifinalists and five finalists before 5,700 online voters chose Toby as the No. 1 mutt.

Toby received 42 percent of the 13,565 total votes to defeat Lucky, a terrier-dachshund mix from California with huge ears, and three other finalists. The results were announced Dec. 16.

Toby, who is thought to be 4 years old, has come a long way from that last January when he was found in a field near Charlottesville, Va.

Paige Eichelman was working at the Charlottesville-Albemarle Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals while her husband attended classes at the Uni-

versity of Virginia. The Eichelmans already owned a dog, a cat and a horse, and knew they'd be moving to Germany in June.

"The prospect of adding another animal to the mix and transporting it halfway around the world — I was not thrilled at the idea," said Mark Eichelman, now the officer in charge at the Mannheim Law Center.

But Paige went to work behind her husband's back, arranging for the dog to be neutered as well as an operation to close its eyelids to prevent infection. The veterinarian told her the dog had been born with no eyes.

Mark eventually agreed to a 48-hour trial run for Toby, which the dog failed miserably. He broke through the baby fence in the Eichelmans' kitchen and proceeded to chew up carpet, a pair of ski pants and the electrical cord of an antique clock.

"The first couple of days were difficult," Mark said. "He seemed so mild-mannered at the shelter. But he knocked the gates askew and went on a rampage."

"The thought crossed my mind that unless the situation got better quickly, it wasn't going to work out."

Eventually, Toby learned how to avoid a trip back to the pound. He now veers around furniture as if guided by radar and makes friends by licking faces. Even Davis, the Eichelman's 13-year-old shepherd-husky, and



PHOTOS BY RAYMOND T. CONWAY/Stars and Stripes

Toby, a border collie mix who was born with no eyes, plays with his favorite chew toy in Mannheim, Germany, on Tuesday. Toby — who belongs to Maj. Mark Eichelman and his wife, Paige, of Mannheim — was recently voted the 2004 Great American Mutt.

Gertrude, their 17-year-old cat, have welcomed their blind buddy.

As champion, Toby has won a watercolor portrait of himself, a best-of-show ribbon and pet supplies. He'll also be featured in books and magazines about animal adoption.

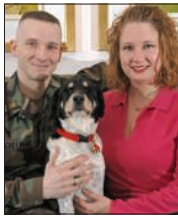
Best of all, the Eichelmans say, is that the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA has started the Toby Fund, an endowment with a goal

of \$300,000 to pay for adopt-a-pet education as well as surgeries on handicapped strays.

There is an anonymous quote that goes: "To err is human; to forgive, canine."

Mark Eichelman put it another way: "He's having quite an impact for a dog born with no eyes."

For more information on Tails in Need Inc., see www.tailsinneed.com. E-mail Charlie Coon at coonc@mail.strips.com.



The Eichelmans pose for a portrait Tuesday with Toby.

Gen. Schoomaker visits deployed troops



Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker, left, awards the Purple Heart medal to Sgt. Dennis McManama of Sandston, Va., at Forward Operating Base Marjah, Iraq, Sunday. McManama was injured during the suicide bombing attack in the dining facility last Tuesday. Schoomaker spent his holiday weekend visiting troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, personally re-enlisting soldiers in both countries and awarding some soldiers their purple heart awards for combat injuries.

Navy investigates sailor's death

A U.S. Navy sailor was found hanging from a pipe outside a tool room aboard the USS Emory S. Land early Wednesday morning in La Maddalena, Sardinia, according to a 6th Fleet official.

The man, whose name was not released, was found by fellow sailors at around 1 a.m., but efforts to revive him were unsuccessful, said 6th Fleet spokeswoman Cmdr. Cate Mueller.

The U.S. Navy is investigating the incident. From staff reports

Two Marines wed before Middle East deployment

BY MARTIN C. EVANS

Newsday

MINNEOLA, N.Y. — The bride had planned to say her vows in her blue Marine parade uniform, but the groom had a similar sartorial outfit in mind.

So instead, Cpl. Jessica Frugoni of West Babylon wore an ivory-colored satin dress, a strapless design that revealed the Marine Corps bulldog tattoo she wears on her back.

Frugoni, 21, and Lance Cpl. German Cruz, 21, a pair of Marines bound for southwest Asia, promised their lives to each other Monday at State Supreme Court.

"Actually, this is a lot bigger than we had planned," said Cruz, of Voorhees, N.J., moments after the couple were pronounced husband and wife in a courtroom crowded by family, friends and well-wishers.

The couple decided to tie the knot less than three weeks ago, after Cruz learned that his planned deployment to Iraq, originally planned for sometime in March, had been moved up to the first days of February. The new bride also will serve in that war-torn region, shipping out for Iraq or Afghanistan in October.

"We realized we really didn't have much time," Cruz said.

Frugoni's relatives said her decision to join the Marines two years ago and her recent plans to get married took them by surprise.

She graduated from West Babylon High School in 2001, then enrolled at Binghamton University.

But after spending a year there, she called home and told her family she had enlisted.

"This is all pretty sudden, so we're all a little in shock," said her father, Charles Frugoni of West Babylon, who served four years in the Marines in the late 1960s and served in Vietnam in 1967.

"They wanted to be married before we went away."

Both Frugoni and Cruz said they joined the military to earn money for college.

The couple, who are stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C., met 17 months ago while stationed in Okinawa, Japan. Military orders separated them soon after, but they were reunited when they were transferred to North Carolina.

They will have another four weeks of married life together before Cruz is scheduled to ship to Iraq.

"I'm nervous, but that's what he signed up for, so I have to be a Marine about it," Frugoni said.

"Of course, there are a lot of people over there getting hurt," she said. "I just hope he comes home safe."

Relatives said they are happy for the newlyweds, but also apprehensive about Cruz's impending deployment.

"It's a little like Vietnam — anything could happen at any time," said Frugoni's father. "But I'm also proud of him. He's doing the right thing."

One group of troops return home...

574th Supply and Services Company back in Mannheim after year in Iraq

By BEN MURRAY
Stars and Stripes

MANNHEIM, Germany — Members of the supply company whose motto is "Warriors, mount up," were finally able to let go of the reins and dismount Tuesday, as the 574th Supply and Services Company returned to Mannheim after a year in Iraq.

More than 80 of the troops deployed with the unit marched into the Mannheim military community's sports arena at about 8 p.m. to the cheers of family members and loved ones.

Many said they were nervous with anticipation about finally having their soldiers home from the war.

"I don't think there will be any words that describe how I'll feel when I see him," said Veronica Apodaca, waiting with her 13-month-old son, Paul Joseph, for her husband, Spc. Paul Apodaca.

For the Apodaca family, the return of the company will be a chance for a father to finally get to know the son born just before the troops left Jan. 8, Veronica said.

"He's only seen a total of maybe four weeks of [Paul Joseph's] life," she said.

Just down the bleachers, another son waited for his father. First Sgt. Larry Tulk arrived just in time to celebrate his 40th birthday on Wednesday.

"It's a good feeling" knowing his father came back safely, said Larry's son, 16-year-old Justin.

Company commander Capt. Natalie Rolling-Edlebeck, said she was extremely proud of her troops' performance in Iraq, where they had the perilous duty of running convoys in the region surrounding Logistics Support Area Anacanda north of Baghdad.

Spread out at four different bases in the Sunni Triangle — the volatile region between Tikrit, Ramadi and Baghdad — the unit transported more than 80 million gallons of fuel and "produced, transported and distributed" more than 200 million gallons of water over the past year, all without losing a soldier, Rolling-Edlebeck said.

"Every commander's dream is to be able to do the mission and bring everyone back alive," she said.

Eleven more members of the 574th are still on their way home from downrange, accompanying the unit's equipment, a rear



Left: Sgt. Jose Sapien, of the 574th Supply and Services Company, greets his wife, Martina, and son, Damian, at the Mannheim military community sports arena Tuesday night after a year of deployment in Iraq. Below: Spc. Allison Miller, from the 574th Supply and Services Company, hugs a friend at a welcoming ceremony Tuesday night in Mannheim, Germany, where the unit returned home after a year in Iraq. Miller had come home just ahead of her fellow soldiers, and greeted them at Tuesday's event.

PHOTOS BY BEN MURRAY
Stars and Stripes

detachment spokeswoman said Tuesday. At full strength, the 574th includes 125 troops and 40 vehicles.

For warriors returning Tuesday, the coming days will bring late holiday celebrations and family time, some said, while others will soon be on the road again. At least two spouses said they had plans to take rest-and-recuperation leave in Hawaii with their soldiers in the coming weeks.

Rolling-Edlebeck's son, Benji, 8, said the family had some gifts waiting under the tree at home for his mom, one of which was the boot-shining kit he got for her.

Her husband, Marc Edlebeck, said the wait for his wife has included a lot of anxiety, but now with her home he was more worried about having to take orders around the house again.

Tulk's wife, Anja, said the return of the troops was "the best Christmas present."

"I'm just happy that he got back safe," she said. "After such a long time, you realize how important your spouse is."

E-mail Ben Murray at: murrayb@mail.strips.esd.mil



... just as another heads out for its Iraq deployment

3 companies of 3rd Corps Support Command shipping out again

By JESSICA INIGO
Stars and Stripes

MANNHEIM, Germany — Three companies within the 3rd Corps Support Command gave their battalion commander a crisp salute and sounded off with a "deployment ready" during a ceremony on Sullivan Barracks Wednesday.

The companies, which all fall under the 181st Transportation Battalion out of Turkey Barracks in Mannheim, will deploy in support of Operation Iraq Freedom 3 for the second time.

The 51st Transportation Company, the 37th Transportation Company (Heavy Equipment Transporter) and the 51st Transportation Company (Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants) will be carrying their colors to prepare for a deployment after the New Year, according to Lt. Col. Tony Cham-

bers, 181st Transportation Battalion commander.

Though each company does different jobs, such as transporting supplies, fuel or heavy equipment within the battalion, each will conduct tactical transportation missions, as well as transport all classes of supply and oversized equipment when deployed.

"Your selfless service is a model for all to follow," Chambers said to the three companies from the podium.

After the ceremony, Chambers said family members are vital to troops being great warfighters and he commended them for "coming out in full force" to support their soldiers.

Chambers also said he is full of pride for the unwavering troops who are prepared to face the dangers of another Iraq deployment. During Operation Iraq Freedom 1, he said, about 70 percent of his

troops faced danger and were attacked on 72 separate occasions. Yet, Chambers said he stood behind his leadership to get the soldiers back safe and sound.

"Commanders, first sergeants, platoon leaders, and platoon sergeants, that trust is yours. Now is the time to put your talents to the test," Chambers said during the ceremony.

One of those leaders, Sgt. William Nowlin, a squad leader in the maintenance platoon, who was extended in June to deploy with his unit again, said despite the fact that he wasn't able to go home, he's still deployment ready and prepared to lead his troops.

The transportation companies are just three out of 14 V Corps companies scheduled to deploy to Iraq this coming year, according to a U.S. Army Europe press release issued in August.

E-mail Jessica Inigo at: inigoj@mail.strips.esd.mil



JESSICA INIGO/Stars and Stripes

Lt. Col. Tony Chambers, commander, 181st Transportation Battalion, speaks Wednesday at a deployment ceremony on Sullivan Barracks in Mannheim, Germany. The three companies leaving from the battalion will not go until after the New Year.

Ambush kills at least 29 Iraqi police

Insurgents' false tip leads security forces into deadly explosion

BY DYAN STOJANOVIC

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Insurgents lured police to a house in west Baghdad with an anonymous tip about a rebel hideout, then set off explosives, killing at least 29 people and wounding 18 in the latest in a series of deadly strikes against Iraqi security forces, police said Wednesday.

The explosion late Tuesday erupted from inside the house in the capital's Ghazaliya district as officers were about to enter, a local police official said. Ten neighboring houses collapsed from the blast and several residents were believed trapped under the rubble. Seven policemen were among the 29 dead.

The police official said the attack was "evidently an ambush" and that "massive amounts of explosives" were used. He said the explosion was apparently triggered by remote control.

The U.S. military said Wednesday 1,700 to 1,800 pounds of explosives appear to have been used. It added that American soldiers and Iraqi troops "worked together through the night to pull potential survivors from the rubble."

Brig. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, assistant commander of the 1st Cavalry Division that controls Baghdad, said the house that exploded was a body trapped.

"The insurgent has no respect for life and an insurgent is anti-Islam," he said.

Two senior aides of Iraq's most feared terrorist leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, have been arrested, the deputy prime minister said Wednesday.

He also said Saddam Hussein will likely be tried early 2005.

Security forces arrested an al-Zarqawi aide identified as Abu Marwan in the northern city



An Iraqi woman stands outside houses destroyed in a blast in west Baghdad on Wednesday. Insurgents lured police to a house in west Baghdad with a tip about a hideout Tuesday night, then set off explosives, killing at least 29 people and wounding 18, police said Wednesday. Seven policemen were among the dead.

of Mosul, Barham Saleh said, adding that the man is believed to have been responsible for supplies and weapons. Another aide, Rada Bazany, reportedly in charge of communications, was arrested in Baghdad.

Hammond said U.S. troops and Iraqi security forces launched an offensive south of Baghdad on Wednesday with an aim of "capturing or detaining or killing insurgents."

Car bombs, ambushes and assassinations killed a total of at least 54 people in the Iraqi capital and across the volatile Sunni Triangle on Tuesday, including 31 policemen and a deputy provincial governor.

Iraqi forces launched a series of raids

Wednesday in Baghdad's northern neighborhood of Azamiya and in the town of Mahmudiya, just south of the capital, including at least 50 suspected insurgents — a detainee several Syrians, the government said.

The U.S. military said in a statement Wednesday that the Iraqi security guards repelled three separate attacks by insurgents who tried to seize two police stations in Mosul, 225 miles northwest of Baghdad.

A Defense Ministry spokesman in Baghdad confirmed Wednesday that the Iraqi National Guard — a paramilitary internal security force that has borne the brunt of the anti-insurgency effort — will be merged with the regular armed forces.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Tuesday, at least 1,325 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,040 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is one higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Tuesday.

The British military has reported 75 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 16; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,187 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 931 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

No deaths reported.

The latest identifications reported by the Defense Department:

Army Staff Sgt. Todd D. Olson, 36, Loyal, Wis.; died Monday after being injured Sunday by an explosive in Samarra, Iraq; assigned to the National Guard's 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, Neillsville, Wis.

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BY DEB RIECHMANN

The Associated Press

CRAWFORD, Texas — President Bush on Wednesday denounced Osama bin Laden's call to boycott the Iraqi elections, saying that the balloting marks a crossroads for Iraq.

"The stakes are clear in this upcoming election," Bush told reporters at his Texas ranch. "It's the difference between the ability for individuals to express themselves and the willingness of an individual to try to impose his dark vision on the world, on the people of Iraq and elsewhere. It's very important that these elections proceed."

In an audiotape broadcast Monday, bin Laden called for a boycott of the election and said the Iraqi vote — for a national assembly to write a constitution — is being held under an interim constitution "imposed by the American occupation" and "infidel" because it did not rely solely on Islamic law.

"Therefore, everyone who participates in this election will be considered infidels," bin Laden said.

The tape surfaced the same day

Bush denounces bin Laden call to boycott Iraq elections

the largest Sunni Muslim political party that had planned to take part announced its withdrawal, saying security was worsening and Iraqis did not understand the political process well enough to vote.

Bush said bin Laden's vision stands in stark contrast to one viewed by a vast majority of Iraqis — that freedom of expression and the right to vote should prevail in Iraq.

"His vision of the world is where people don't participate in democracy," Bush said. "His vision of the world is where people kill and live in order to affect their behavior and affect their way of living."

The president said he talked on Tuesday with the president of the interim Iraqi government, Ghazi al-Yawer, a Sunni, who expressed concern about security in Mosul but said most people in Iraq — Sunni and Shia — want to cast ballots.

"The task at hand is to provide as much security as possible for the election officials, as well as for the people inside cities like Mosul to encourage them to express their will," Bush told reporters at an airplane hangar at his ranch.

Gen. does guard duty to give GIs day off

Two soldiers at a remote fire base in Afghanistan recently got a gift from the big guy.

No, not Santa Claus.

For Christmas, Maj. Gen. Eric T. Olson, commander of Combined Joint Task Force 76, traveled from his headquarters in Bagram to Waza Khwa fire base, where he gave two soldiers the day off and pulled their guard duty shift.

"Waza Khwa is one of the more remote and less developed fire bases," Olson stated in an Army news release. "I thought if there were any soldiers who could use a good break by switching with me for a day in Bagram, Waza Khwa was a good place to find them."

Spc. Freddy Barahona, 22, and Spc. Michael Hanes, 21, assigned to the 25th Infantry Division (Light) as infantrymen in Company C, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry

Regiment, briefly met and talked with Olson before departing for Bagram, the release stated.

"Burger King was our first stop when we arrived," said Barahona, a native of Antioch, Calif. "It was great to be able to spend Christmas relaxing, watching some football, picking up a few items at the PX and being able to eat something that reminds us of home."

Olson spent his holiday accompanying several Company C soldiers on a patrol to two nearby villages following Christmas dinner and a brief tour of the base, according to the release.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Stars and Stripes

A 'housy' T-shirt

When soldiers of Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment returned from a nighttime patrol in Baghdad, they found a



"souvenir" on the duty desk inside the company barracks.

Sitting in one corner were two bright-orange T-shirts bearing a familiar phrase back home ... with an Operation Iraqi Freedom twist. In black lettering were the fol-

lowing words: "I surrendered to the Americans and all I got was this lousy T-shirt."

The shirts brought chuckles from the group, which was scheduled for an early morning patrol less than six hours later.

Jason Chudy contributed to this report.

Commander of Combined Joint Task Force 76 Maj. Gen. Eric T. Olson talks to soldiers of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment in Waza Khwa, Afghanistan, following a patrol through villages on Christmas Day.

COURTESY OF BRADLEY RHEIN U.S. Army

Raids target insurgents



JASON CHUDY/Stars and Stripes

Capt. Dave Maxwell, commander of Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, shows a photo of a jailed insurgent to a man detained in a house during an early Wednesday morning raid in southern Baghdad as a masked Iraqi interpreter translates his questions. The joint U.S. Army/Iraqi National Guard raid targeted three houses containing suspected anti-U.S./Iraqi interim government insurgents. In this house, soldiers discovered two AK-47 assault rifles and dozens of rounds of ammunition. Iraqis are allowed to keep one weapon and one magazine of ammunition. In other houses targeted in raids, a leaflet calling for people to kill Americans was found, as were three vehicles used to fire on U.S. and government forces. Also shown is Sgt. Jonathan Jacobs.

SEALs file suit against AP over photos

BY LEO SHANE III

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Six Navy SEALs filed suit Tuesday against The Associated Press for publishing photos they said revealed their identities and connected them to the prisoner abuse scandals in Iraq.

The men, some of whom are still serving in Iraq, are asking for unspecified damages from the news service. They alleged the photos invaded their privacy and put their lives at risk by showing their faces in a series of photographs published earlier this month.

The photos, which showed the soldiers with hooded and handcuffed prisoners, were obtained by Associated Press reporter Seth Hettner, who also wrote a story suggesting they might show evidence of prisoner abuse.

Stars and Stripes ran the story and one of the photos in its Dec. 5 editions.

U.S. military forces came under heavy scrutiny this summer after the discovery of pictures showing Army Reserve troops abusing Iraqi prisoners at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison.

Navy Special Warfare Command began investigating the six SEALs following the photos release. Spokesman Lt. Taylor Clark said Wednesday that the investigation has been expanded to include the unit's commanders, but so far the Navy has not released any of its findings.

James Huston, attorney for the SEALs, said the photos in this case were taken for documentation purposes and do not show any violation of standard covert operations procedures.

"When this goes to trial, I think everyone will see that they did nothing wrong," Huston said. "But they've been tarred because this reporter said this could be the earliest evidence of prisoner abuse in Iraq."

Associated Press assistant general counsel Dave Tomlin dismissed the charges.

"We believe AP's use of the photos and the manner in which they were obtained were entirely lawful and proper," he said. "We intend to defend ourselves and our reporter vigorously and, we expect, successfully."

In a statement, one of the SEALs called the reporter's actions "completely unnecessary."

"We are very disappointed in this reporter's unprofessional behavior and the fact that he showed such disregard for our, our safety, and the ongoing work we are doing," the unnamed plaintiff said.

"We find this conduct especially appalling in light of the continuing war in Iraq and the fact that we are continuing to put ourselves at risk."

Huston said since the photos were released they have been published widely in the Arab media, putting the SEALs' lives in danger. Several were posted by Cuban government officials on a billboard outside of Guantanamo Bay, comparing the United States military to Nazis.

The lawsuit, filed in California, also accuses the AP of illegally obtaining the photos from a private Web site and names two of the SEALs' wives as co-plaintiffs who suffered emotional trauma as a result of the incident.

In addition to the damages, the suit asks that AP be stopped from republishing the photographs or releasing any related photos.

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Parents of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq take part in humanitarian aid campaign

BY SHAFIKA MATTAR

The Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan — Parents of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq emotionally expressed their opposition to the war and occupation Tuesday during a visit to Jordan as part of a humanitarian aid campaign to help Iraqis displaced by fighting in Fallujah last month.

Fernando Suarez del Solar, 47, from San Diego, California, said he is angry with the U.S. administration "because American soldiers die for the oil and not for a just cause." He accused President George W. Bush of lying about the reasons for the Iraq war.

He said that since the death of his only

son, Jesus, 20, in the opening days of the war in 2003, he has been traveling the United States to speak out against the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

"I am angry because thousands and thousands of Iraqis die as well," said Del Solar, who visited Iraq last year to visit the site of his son's death and listen to Iraqis' needs. "Bush" promised the Iraqis democracy and he is depriving them of their daily needs of electricity, food and safety."

Del Solar and his wife, Rosa, were part of a group of 14 people representing three U.S.-based humanitarian organizations who came to Jordan to send \$600,000 in humanitarian supplies to Fallujah. Three other parents of killed soldiers were

in the group.

Medea Benjamin, who organized the trip to Jordan, said the delegation would remain in Amman until Jan. 4 to "listen to and understand the real ordeal of the Iraqis and supervise the shipment of the aid to Fallujah."

The group, which arrived Monday in Amman, does not plan to travel to Iraq.

She said the group had already sent to Fallujah three shipments of medical supplies, blankets and toys collected by Global Exchange, CODEPINK and Physicians for Social Responsibility.

A bloody, two-week U.S. military offensive in November wrested Fallujah from the control of insurgents. Most of Fallujah's approximately 250,000 people fled before the assault.

Nadia McCaffrey, 59, of Tracy, California, said she was compelled to help Iraqis by her son, who told her shortly before his death: "I don't know what we are doing here and why we are here."

Patrick McCaffrey, 34, a member of California National Guard 579th Engineer Battalion, was killed in the city of Balad last June.

"My son thought that he was going to Iraq to do something for the Iraqi people. This feeling did not last one week," McCaffrey said.

"I have to live with it and to do so I have to fight the war, that is why I am here," she said with tears in her eyes.



PHOTOS BY JOSEPH GIORDANO/Stars and Stripes

Above: Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry catalog a weapons cache they seized near Taji, Iraq. Among the find were several automatic weapons, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, a sniper rifle, pistols, dozens of full ammunition magazines and a few mortar sights. **Left:** Spc. Jesse LeBlanc of the Black Sheep searches for weapons in a farmhouse near Taji.

Patrols have varying degrees of success

Some Guard units find weapons near Taji, Iraq

BY JOSEPH GIORDANO

Stars and Stripes

TAJI, Iraq — In the past two days, two separate patrols from the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment seized large weapons caches and detained 10 suspected insurgents.

Over the same two days, several other patrols turned up nothing.

It's part of the day-to-day dichotomy of the U.S. military presence in Iraq: Days can go by without incident, and dozens of searches and patrols amount only to a show of force and deterrence. Other times, targeted raids and search operations end with illegal weapons piled on tables and suspects on their way to detention facilities.

Monday was an example of the

latter. Members of the Black Sheep — soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment attached to the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, both National Guard units — rolled back into Camp Cooke with four detainees and weapons they seized from a farmhouse near Taji.

The cache included several machine guns, a sniper rifle, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, pistols, several full ammunition magazines, mortar sights and other materials. Curiously, the weapons were buried in empty missile tubes marked as coming from Kuwait's Ministry of Defense. Soldiers assume the tubes — and possibly the missiles that were once inside — were looted from Kuwait during Iraq's 1990 invasion of that country.

On Tuesday, Company A, 1st of the 69th, made a similar find, taking in six suspects.

At the same time those detainees were being processed, a platoon of Black Sheep soldiers was patrolling in farmland near Taji. Rolling out in Bradley fighting vehicles, the first stop was a small farm compound they'd visited twice before.

The first time was after a roadside bomb detonated along a canal about 100 yards away. The second time, soldiers found parts of a mortar system and confiscated a rifle.

This time, the search turned up nothing but a few spent shotgun shells, which the owner said were from hunting parties who had stopped at his house. Staff Sgt. Joshua Garrett, 25, of Houma, La., ran through a list of questions



Staff Sgt. Joshua Garrett of the Black Sheep gets ready to dismount from a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and conduct a patrol in the Taji countryside.

about weapons, availability of power and fuel and the upcoming elections.

"We are ready to vote. We want that very much," the landowner said, through a translator working with the troops. "We want the elections today, before tomorrow."

But as Garrett asked more questions, it was apparent more work needed to be done.

"Do you know where your polling place is?" Garrett asked?

The man shrugged, "No." The local sheiks, he said, haven't passed on that information.

As the conversation was taking

place, Spc. Jonathon Boudreaux, 21, of Raceland, La., and Spc. Jesse LeBlanc, 23, also of Houma, searched the remaining rooms. In two rooms, they found sleeping children, but nothing illegal.

Even the patrols that don't turn up weapons serve another purpose, the soldiers said. When they first arrived at Camp Cooke, the base took mortar or rocket fire nearly every day, they said. Since stepping up patrols and "denying the enemy terrain," they haven't had a round land inside the wire in weeks.

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2 Mass. kids helping troops phone home

Young entrepreneurs turn used cell phones into free calling cards for GIs

BY KEN MAGUIRE
The Associated Press

BOSTON — For all the billions of dollars being spent on the war in Iraq, 14-year-old Brittany Bergquist is surprised that the Army doesn't do what she and her little brother do: help soldiers phone home.

"I'm kind of happy that they didn't supply them," she said, "because we've always wanted to do something for the soldiers."

With \$14 from their piggy banks, she and her 12-year-old brother Robbie started Cell Phones For Soldiers. In less than eight months, the organization has provided \$250,000 worth of prepaid calling cards for American soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait.

They raise money by collecting old cellular phones and selling them to companies that refurbish them for resale on the Internet, then use it buy the calling cards.

"I'm so happy that we can help them," said Brittany, an eighth-grader from Norwell, Mass.

It all started in April, when the family heard about a Massachusetts soldier who ran up \$7,600 in cell phone charges calling home from Iraq.

Cellular provider T-Mobile forgave much of the bill. But Brittany and Robbie figured there must be other soldiers — including their cousin, Donnie Williamson — who are stationed in Iraq and want to call home more often but can't afford it.

The Bergquist kids pooled their funds — \$14 — and got friends to kick in another \$7. They opened a bank account at South Shore Savings Bank, which was so impressed it contributed \$500.

Yard sales followed, and newspaper articles. Soon, national TV news crews were calling and the kids gave live interviews on morning shows.

Hundreds of schools and organizations, from Hawaii to Georgia, have started chapters and become drop-off centers for used cell phones.

"It's hard doing everything," Brittany



Brittany Bergquist, 14, left, and her brother, 12-year-old Robbie, pose in their Norwell, Mass., home. With \$14 from their piggy banks, the pair started Cell Phones For Soldiers, which provides prepaid calling cards for American soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait. The organization collects old cell phones and sells them to companies that refurbish them, then uses the money to buy calling cards for U.S. troops.

said. "But it doesn't matter to us. We think about how hard the soldiers work every day and they don't have a choice to stop."

On Tuesday, the Internal Revenue Service granted Cell Phones For Soldiers nonprofit status.

Many large companies have told the Bergquists they were waiting for the nonprofit status so their contributions are tax deductible, said their father, Bob Bergquist, a science teacher at Norwell Middle School. Mother Gail is also a teacher.

One challenge for the Bergquists has

been identifying troops before they deploy, because once they are overseas it gets harder to contact individual soldiers. The Pentagon only delivers mail from family or friends; undressed bulk mailings are prohibited.

"We fortunately live in an American society that's very generous [but it] overwhelmed our mailing system in the past," said Army Lt. Col. Joe Yoswa, a Defense Department spokesman.

He says soldiers can use phone banks and Internet cafes, but it's up to them to

pay the fees out of pocket.

Using a cell phone in Iraq can cost a soldier up to \$3 a minute in roaming charges, according to Bob Bergquist.

The Bergquists have traveled to Minnesota, Texas, Louisiana, and New York to personally hand out calling cards to soldiers about to be deployed to war zones.

"They've made sacrifices," Brittany skipped a statewide cheerleading competition, and Robbie has missed big soccer and hockey games.

"We have a scrapbook that we keep," Robbie said. "We look back at what we've done. It always helps keep us motivated."

The daily e-mails from soldiers and their families also help.

One wrote: "Hearing from family members is what keeps a soldier going and gives them the drive to get the job done and get home."

Helping families stay connected is the biggest reward, Brittany said.

"That's a big motivation, for families to know where their sons and daughters are at all times," she said.

They also get e-mails from people who oppose the war.

"We tell them we're not supporting or endorsing the war," Bob Bergquist said. "What we're concerned about are the soldiers. ... What we want to do is support them."

The Bergquist kids have quickly become role models. Brittany will be featured in an upcoming issue of Teen magazine. Gabrielle Housekeeping and Parade magazine are also doing stories.

But all the attention won't distract from their mission, the kids said.

"I think we're going to be doing this forever," Brittany said.

"As long as there are troops not home, we'll be doing this."

Reserve forces put lives on hold while waiting for word on Iraq



Marine reservist Kevin Lackey poses Tuesday with his parents, Bruce and Theresa Lackey, in Willowbrook, Ill. Lackey is one of more than 1 million National Guard and Reserve troops who have their lives are on hold awaiting possible orders to Iraq.

BY DON BABWIN
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Kevin Lackey is eager to take what he's learned in the Marine Reserves into war in Iraq. Theresa Lackey can't bear to watch the news, for fear she'll see soldiers searching for the enemy in houses pockmarked by bullet holes — the kind of work her son has been training for.

The Lackeys live in suburban Chicago, but their story could be told from anywhere in the country. As accounts of the war and the soldiers fighting there dominate the headlines, there is a quieter story for more than 1 million National Guard and Reserve troops — waiting and wondering if they'll be sent to Iraq or sent back.

They've put their lives on hold, put off college, buying homes and cars, knowing they could join nearly 186,000 of their Guard and Reserve colleagues now on active duty, more than 60,000 of whom are in Iraq or Afghanistan.

They've said their goodbyes only to be told at the last minute they're not going anywhere — not yet, anyway — as their families brace for their deployment.

Kevin Lackey, 20, said his commanders were so sure his unit was going to be activated and deployed to Iraq this fall, "They told us to make our wills, tell family members to have a life without you and life with

you in a combat zone. Then that fell through."

"It's like a roller coaster," said Theresa Lackey. That's particularly true during the holidays, which she suspects will be her son's last at home before his ship out. "It makes us all more desperate to spend time with him."

Matt Comeaux also uses "roller coaster"

“It's like a roller coaster.”

Theresa Lackey
mother of reservist Kevin Lackey,
who may be deployed

to describe the last few months. A sergeant in the Illinois National Guard, Comeaux said he learned last spring that his battalion was being activated this winter.

Knowing he would be gone for 18 months, the 36-year-old divorced father moved out of the house he was renting and put his belongings in storage. He even found a new home for his dog.

"How do you ask somebody to babysit your dog for a year-and-a-half?" he asked.

A couple months before the unit was to leave, though, Comeaux found out he wasn't leaving because "There wasn't enough slots at my rank for me to go with

my battalion."

After being told he was next up if someone of his rank needed to be replaced, he found out he would not be going at all. Then, almost as soon as he told his 13-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter that he was staying home, he started hearing that he might be deployed after all.

In November, he was told he was being activated — in one week.

"I get to see my kids two weekends a month," Comeaux said. "I didn't think I would be able to say goodbye to my kids."

About two days later, those orders were canceled, too.

Such uncertainty is a reality of being at war, when needs for more troops can change rapidly, said Major Tim Franklin, spokesman for the Illinois Army National Guard. "Those decisions are made at the Pentagon and (U.S. Army Forces Command) based on the needs of commanders on the ground in Iraq," he said. "And those needs change."

Comeaux isn't angry but describes the situation as "very emotional."

"It's up and down, not knowing what is going on," said Comeaux, who is staying at a friend's house, living out of a suitcase.

Comeaux said most of the guardsmen he knows don't want to go to Iraq, and some cringe when he calls to give them an update. But "they know that's their job," he said.

IN THE WORLD

Nations answer calls to help devastated area

BY LELY T. DJUHARI
The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — Cargo planes touched down with a Wednesday bearing everything from lentils to water purifiers to help survivors facing the threat of epidemic after this week's quake-tsunami catastrophe. The first Indonesian military teams reached the devastated west coast of Sumatra island, finding thousands of bodies and increasing the death toll among 12 nations to nearly 77,000.

The international Red Cross warned that the toll could eventually pass 100,000. And the race was on to prevent an outbreak of disease and to curb food shortages among the millions homeless.

The United Nations reported Wednesday that the world's richest nations have pledged more than \$50 million for victims of the killer earthquake and tsunami.

Spain announced the largest single contribution on Wednesday — \$67.8 million. Britain

U.S. military beefs up relief efforts

BY PATRICK DICKSON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military is adding more ships, planes and people to its relief efforts on behalf of the victims of Sunday's massive earthquake and resulting tsunamis.

Joint Chiefs of Staff Director of Operations Lt. General James T. Conway briefed reporters from the State Department on Wednesday. He said that six C-130 aircraft will be operating out of the air base at Utapao, Thailand, south of Bangkok.

"We have committed nine P-3 aircraft," Conway said, "four of which will operate out of Utapao, the other five will operate out of Diego Garcia," a small island in the Indian Ocean that escaped damage from the ocean surges.

"The [USS Abraham] Lincoln Carrier Strike Group... has been diverted now to the Gulf of Thailand," Conway said.

pledged \$29 million. Australia said Wednesday it would give an additional \$27.6 million. The United States pledged \$35 million [see related story on page 10].

Sri Lanka said it was getting its first reports of measles and diarrhea. Paramedics in southern India began vaccinating 65,000 survivors against cholera, ty-

"The Bonhomme Richard Expeditionary Strike Group was in Guam. It is forgoing port visits there and in Singapore to move rapidly to the Bay of Bengal. It is estimated to be on station sometime on or before 7 January. It has seven ships associated with the strike group [and] carries 25 helicopters.

"[There are] 2,100 Marines [and] 1,400 sailors embarked aboard the Bonhomme Richard Expeditionary Strike Group and 15th MEU [Marine Expeditionary Unit]," he said.

The U.S. Pacific Command, which is in charge of relief efforts, will send five ships with fresh-water producing capability.

A ship with a field hospital will also be sent, Conway said. Two more ships based at Diego Garcia with a 90,000-gallon fresh water capability will be sent as soon as possible.

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double blow in Sunday's disaster, shattered both by the most powerful earthquake in 40 years and perhaps the deadliest tsunami in recorded history.

"Seventy-five percent of the west coast is destroyed and some places it's 100 percent," Maj. Gen. Endang Suwarya, the military commander of the island's Aceh province, said. "These people are isolated and we will try and get them help."

The first military teams reached the devastated fishing town of Meulaboh on Sumatra's coast, and across the coast they found thousands of bodies, bringing Indonesia's toll to 45,268, according to the Health Ministry.

Sri Lanka on Wednesday listed more than 22,400 people dead, India close to 7,000 — with 8,000 missing and feared dead. Thailand put its toll at more than 1,800. Another 340 were killed in Malaysia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Somalia, Tanzania and Kenya.

Misawa couple survives tsunami while on honeymoon

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

MISAWA AIR BASE, Japan — The Shellys waited a year for a honeymoon they now wish they could forget.

Airman 1st Class Chad Shelly and his wife, Megan, are among the survivors of the worst tsunami in recorded history.

They returned to Misawa on Tuesday night, tan and tanned, with numerous scrapes and bruises and a digital camera that recorded both the happiest of memories and the worst imaginable.

On Wednesday, after checking into the hospital and setting up an appointment to speak with a counselor at Life Skills, the Shellys shared their story with Stars and Stripes.

Married a year, Chad, 20, an entry controller with Misawa's 35th Security Forces Squadron, and Megan, 21, celebrated their first anniversary by taking the honeymoon they never had in Thailand over the holiday.

After a visit to Chang Mai in the north, they were to spend several days in Thailand's famed southern paradise of Phuket. Sunday morning, the day after Christmas, the plan was to go scuba diving. The Shellys were checking out gear and watching an instructional video at a scuba dive shop and bar on Patong Beach when all hell broke loose.

The first wave, which the couple estimated came ashore sometime after 9:30 a.m. local time, washed far on the beach, dumping fish and crabs on the sand. The scuba instructor remarked he had "never seen anything like this," Chad said.

About two minutes later, another wave crashed into the scuba shop, trapping Megan and two others in a storage room.

"The water filled up to armpit level real quick," Chad said. "It just came in and somebody took a swimming pool, turned it upside down and dumped it on you. We didn't even know this was a tidal wave. We just didn't know."

Chad, who was outside the storage room when the wave hit, was able to climb up on the clay-shingled roof and pry the door open from above, freeing Megan and the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHAD SHELLEY/Stars and Stripes

Above: A makeshift bar was all that was left standing of a scuba shop that Airman 1st Class Chad Shelly and his wife, Megan, of Misawa Air Base, Japan, were sitting in when the massive tsunami roared onto Patong Beach in Phuket, Thailand, on Sunday.
Right: The tsunami left a street near Patong Beach covered in debris.



others. Fearing more waves, the pair struggled to get up on another roof, helping, among others, a 3-year-old Japanese boy separated from his parents and a trembling, elderly Frenchman to higher ground. That's when they saw the third wave coming, a towering wall of water about 10 to 15 feet high, Chad estimated.

"I thought 'we have to get higher,'" Megan said. They jumped onto the top of another one-story building farther away from the beach with a few other people. The giant wave crested palm trees on the beach and the Shellys watched with horror as the top of the wave washed over the scuba shop, ripping it apart.

"We just jumped with all we could to the next roof," Megan said.

"That one broke as we jumped onto it," Chad said. "We climbed up onto the next roof and waited."

And prayed. That was the last standing building on the beach. The water rose to just below roof level.

"If another wave would have come, we would not have survived," Megan said, esti-

imating that they were about 50 to 60 feet from the beach at that point.

"Everything on the beach was gone," Megan said. "Most of the concrete buildings still stood, but the windows were gone. Every piece of furniture was gone. It was just like a gutted, empty house. There were TVs, computers, shoes, food strewn all along the beach. The water just washed everything away."

The Shellys didn't see anyone die but they won't forget the sounds.

"People screaming for their children, for loved ones. The biggest thing you heard was the ocean. Everyone was looking for the next wave to come crashing," Megan said.

Chad and Megan waited in the baking sun for three hours with an Australian and a few other tourists on the roof. The water level in the streets below had receded to about 5 to 6 inches. Some locals helped them down and back to their hotel room. They had scratches, bruises and gashes from falling.

Their hotel on Patong Beach weathered the waves, and because they still had their passports and airline tickets, the Shellys were on one of the first flights out of Phuket on Monday, the same day they were scheduled to leave.

Four days later, the near-death experience seems like a dream. The young couple simply can't believe they survived.

"I actually thought we were going to die," Megan said.

Megan credits her husband for not panicking when the second wave blew into the scuba shack.

"I was just thinking of how to get higher, just survival I guess," Chad said. "If either one of us had panicked, we would have just died."

A beach lover, Megan said it will be a long time before she sets foot near an ocean again.

"Nobody had any warning," she said. "I just feel so sorry for the people who died, who didn't make it."

"We're so lucky," Chad said.

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Bush announces coalition to help in relief effort

BY DEB RIECHMANN

The Associated Press

CRAWFORD, Texas — President George W. Bush announced Wednesday the United States, India, Australia and Japan have formed an international coalition to coordinate worldwide relief and reconstruction efforts for the Asian region ravaged by a deadly earthquake and tsunami.

"We will prevail over this destruction," Bush said from his Texas ranch in his first comments on the disaster Sunday that so far has killed more than 76,000.

Bush said the catastrophe had "brought loss and grief to the world that is beyond our comprehension," and he pledged a multifaceted response from the United States. In the short-term, the help will include damage assessment teams and U.S. military manpower, such as a Marine expeditionary force followed by long-term re-

building assistance. He said he'd also examine a suggestion from German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to consider putting a moratorium on the debt of hard-hit Somalia and Indonesia.

"We'll look at all requests," said Bush, who talked by phone Wednesday morning with leaders from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and India. "We're still in the stage of immediate help. But slowly but surely, the size of the problem will become known, particularly when it comes to rebuilding infrastructure and community to help these affected parts of the world get back up on their feet."

Secretary of State Colin Powell, coordinating relief assistance, telephone U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Foreign Ministers Nobutaka Machiura of Japan and Alexander Downer of Australia.

Meantime, the International



An airport crewmember prepares relief supplies to transport to Aceh Province at Halim Perdana Kusumah base in Jakarta on Tuesday.

Monetary Fund said it will work with governments affected by the disaster to provide reconstruction and financial assistance. But details have not been worked out, with governments more focused now on dealing with the immediate humanitarian crisis, officials of the financial institution said.

Bush called on Americans to donate cash to relief organizations to augment the response and said he expected several other nations to join the coalition started by the four countries.

He expressed concern the Asian region wasn't prepared with a

warning system that foretold the massive tsunamis and threw his support behind creation of a worldwide system.

Bush also pointedly dismissed a United Nations official's suggestion that rich nations like the United States have been "stingy" in relief efforts. "I felt like the person who made that statement was very misguided and ill informed," Bush said.

Hundreds of Americans remain missing. Bush said U.S. officials were working hard to locate many more Americans who remain unaccounted for and to provide assistance to those who were injured or displaced in the region.

Few wild animals killed by tsunami

The Associated Press

YALA NATIONAL PARK, Sri Lanka — Wildlife officials in Sri Lanka expressed surprise Wednesday that they found no evidence of large-scale animal deaths from the weekend's tsunami — indicating that animals may have sensed the wave coming.

An Associated Press photographer who flew over Sri Lanka's Yala National Park in a helicopter saw abundant wildlife, including elephants, buffalo, deer, and not a single animal corpse.

Floodwaters from the tsunami swept into the park, uprooting trees and toppling cars onto their roofs — one car even ended up on top of a huge tree — but the animals apparently were not harmed and may have sought out high ground, said Gahan de Silva Wijeyeratne, whose Jetwing Eco Holidays ran a hotel in the park.

"This is very interesting. I am finding bodies of humans, but I have yet to see a dead animal," said Wijeyeratne. "Maybe what we think is true is that animals have a sixth sense. The human death toll in Sri Lanka surpassed 21,000."

Waves of history don't top tsunami

BY RANDOLPH E. SCHMID

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The tsunami that claimed thousands of lives across the Indian Ocean had the deadliest great waves in more than a century and probably in modern history.

More than 36,000 people were killed by the tsunami following the explosion of the volcano Krakatau in the Sunda Strait near Java on Aug. 27, 1883. Many estimates of the number killed in that disaster were even higher.

The toll from Sunday's tsunami has now topped 76,800 deaths in 11 nations.

Following the 1883 eruption, waves estimated as high as 90 feet slammed ashore on nearby islands, wiping out coastal communities in what is now Indonesia. That had been the deadliest tsunami of modern times until now.

The earliest description of a tsunami-type wave came from 479 B.C. in the northern part of the Aegean Sea. Similar waves have been reported worldwide, though they are more common in the Pacific with its earthquake-prone perimeter.

Many historians believe the explosive eruption of Santorini in the Aegean Sea in 1500 B.C. caused a tsunami that brought widespread devastation to the eastern Mediterranean.

Thousands of coastal residents in Spain, Portugal and North Africa were killed by waves spawned by a 1755 earthquake at Lisbon.

Over the centuries, Japan has been the most plagued by tsunamis, with at least 66,000 deaths recorded there since A.D. 684. Among the deadliest tsunamis was one that struck Honshu, Japan, in 1896, killing an estimated 200,000.

Many coastal residents were in the streets celebrating a holiday when the wave struck. The next day, fishermen returning home found a scene of devastation, strewn with bodies and ruined homes for miles.



Tsunami-stricken areas near the capital city of Indonesia were still water-logged on Monday.

Indonesia has seen more than 50,000 deaths in more than 30 destructive tsunamis over the centuries — not including the most recent disaster.

On April 1, 1946, a Pacific-wide tsunami was generated by a magnitude 7.8 earthquake near Unimak Island in Alaska's Aleutian Island chain.

A huge wave destroyed the U.S. Coast Guard's Scotch Cap lighthouse on Unimak, killing all five of its occupants. The lighthouse was a steel-reinforced concrete structure standing about 90 feet above sea level.

That tsunami reached the Hawaiian Islands about five hours later, obliterating Hilo's waterfront and killing 159 people.

Altogether, 165 people died, including children attending school at Hawaii's Laupahoehoe Point, where waves reaching up to 25 feet struck.

As a result of this wave, two years later the United States established a Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii.

Other notable tsunamis have included:

■ Aug. 16, 1976: A tsunami generated by a quake on Mindanao in the Philippines killed between 5,000 and 8,000 people in the Moro Gulf region.

■ March 28, 1964: A magnitude 8.4 quake in Alaska generated tsunamis that caused damage in southeastern Alaska, in Vancouver Island, British Columbia, and in the states of Washington, California and Hawaii.

■ May 22, 1960: The largest earthquake — magnitude 8.6 — of the 20th century occurred off the coast of south central Chile. It generated a Pacific-wide tsunami, which was destructive locally in Chile and throughout the Pacific.

■ Nov. 4, 1952: A strong earthquake off the coast of Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula generated a great, destructive Pacific-wide tsunami, causing considerable damage and loss of life.

Despite ruin, forces still on terror watch

The Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Security forces on alert for possible terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia during the Christmas-New Year holidays are trying to remain vigilant, although their focus has shifted to coping with the tsunami that has devastated regional coastlines.

Dealing with the disaster aftermath across the region with about a dozen countries affected by Sunday's earthquake and resulting tsunami "divides attention," said senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, head of the Philippine National Police's anti-terrorism office.

"We have a certain degree of vulnerability," he added, suggesting terror groups might try to take advantage of the chaos as attacks could result in his country.

While the Philippines was spared the havoc that its neighbors have suffered this week, it was still recovering from tropical storms that killed over 1,000 people when a large time bomb was found on a bus in Manila on Christmas Eve, just before it was set to explode.

"These people don't care. The most important thing is that they can wreak havoc on their targets," Mendoza said.

Still, terrorist or militant groups face the same restraints on their movements as anyone else because local infrastructure has been destroyed, noted Bradley Allan, a security consultant.

Dollar slips to new all-time low against euro

BY MATT SURMAN
The Associated Press

BERLIN — The U.S. dollar fell to a new all-time low Wednesday against the euro, which touched \$1.3646 in thin year-end trading.

The shared European currency hit a record high against the dollar for the fifth straight business day as light trading around the Christmas and New Year's holidays exaggerated currency swings in foreign exchange markets.

The U.S. currency picked up some ground in later trading, with the euro dropping back to \$1.3589.

The dollar had also shown slight gains in late New York trading Tuesday, when the euro was quoted at \$1.3609 after its previous record high of \$1.3643 earlier in the day.

The dollar strengthened against the Japanese yen in Asian trading. It bought 103.22 yen at the end of Tokyo trading, up 0.16 yen from late Tuesday in Tokyo and above

its late Tuesday level of 103.03 yen in New York.

In late European trading, the dollar bought 104.07 yen.

The dollar was briefly buoyed by stronger-than-expected U.S. December consumer confidence data Tuesday before sliding again Wednesday. It has been weighed down by worries over the ballooning U.S. trade and budget deficit.

With no short-term fix for deficits in sight, many analysts expect the dollar to

continue weakening, and some have predicted a euro level of \$1.40 or higher by the end of 2005.

The 12-nation euro initially fell against the dollar after its 1999 debut, but it has risen about 65 percent since bottoming out at 82 cents in October 2000.

Though Washington professes a "strong dollar" policy, most analysts believe the U.S. government is content to see the dollar fall because it makes U.S. exports cheaper and can help export-dependent sectors of the economy.



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Musharraf's about-face

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistan's President Gen. Pervez Musharraf is planning an important speech to the nation, a senior official said Wednesday, amid speculation he will explain his decision to renege on a promise to step down as army chief by the end of the year.



Musharraf

Musharraf was set to make the address on radio and television Thursday, the senior government official said on condition of anonymity.

Musharraf, who seized power in a bloodless coup in 1999, pledged last December to leave his job as army chief and become a civilian head of state by the end of 2004.

But in recent weeks, Musharraf has said he will go back on his promise.

Israeli drug use

JERUSALEM — Drug consumption in the Israeli military is on the rise, and up to 10 percent of active-duty soldiers are now users, the commander of Israel's military police said Tuesday.

Gen. Mickey Barel's comments are almost certain to raise alarm in Israel, where the army is highly regarded. Military service in Israel is compulsory, with most males serving three years and females two.

Defector a U.S. worker

SEOUL, South Korea — A South Korean man who had worked for the U.S. military has defected to North Korea, the North's official news agency claimed Wednesday.

Kim Ki-ho, 59, left for the North because he could no longer stand South Korean society where national dignity and human rights are infringed on by the United States, the North's Korean Central News Agency said.

The report said Kim was a native of the industrial town of Gumi, and had once worked as an inspector at the 6th Ordnance Battalion, at the U.S. 8th Army Headquarters in South Korea.

The U.S. military couldn't immediately confirm if any person by that name had worked for them.

Photo and stories from wire reports

Saudi explosions rock Riyadh near ministry

BY ABDULLAH AL-SHIHRI

The Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Two large explosions shook the Saudi capital late Wednesday, according to officials and TV reports.

The first explosion at about 8:35 p.m. shattered windows and sent smoke and flames rising into the nighttime sky near the Saudi

Interior Ministry in central Riyadh.

A police official said the second explosion, about an hour later, took place in a center for recruiting emergency troops located five miles from the scene of the first explosion. He said the cause of the two explosions was not immediately clear. Al-Arabiya television reported the sec-

ond explosion was part of a failed attempt to storm the recruiting center.

Saudi television said several security agents were slightly injured in the first blast. There were no immediate reports of casualties in the second.

Al-Arabiya reported that several people were injured and shooting was heard near the tunnel.

The Al-Jazeera satellite television station reported it was a car bomb attack.

In addition to the Interior Ministry, the Civil Service Ministry, a post office and a luxury hotel are in the area, known as Al-Murabba.

On Dec. 6 Saudi militants attacked the U.S. Consulate in Jeddah, killing nine people.

The Saudi government has been cracking down on militants since a series of Al-Qaida-affiliated attacks on residential compounds in May 2003. The attacks have killed several Westerners.

Many senior militants have been either killed or arrested in the campaign, including more than half of a list of 26 most-wanted terrorists.

A first for 105-year-old

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — A 105-year-old Bosnian granny has been treated by a doctor for the first time in her life, a Bosnian news agency reported Wednesday.

Milja Markovic slipped and fell in her house in a remote mountain village near Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia earlier this week and broke her leg, her son Momir told Srna news agency. He said his mother had never been ill in her life.

Markovic was not even registered in the files of the local hospital in Srebrenica, located some 43 miles northeast of Sarajevo.

Markovic is considered to be one of the oldest people in Bosnia, the agency said.

Lethal liquor kills 51

BOMBAY, India — Poisonous liquor sold by an illegal bar in India's financial capital has killed 51 people and sent nearly 100 others to hospital over two days, provoking citywide raids on alcohol vendors, a municipal official said Tuesday.

Police arrested the woman who owned the bar, and 6,800 gallons of illicit homemade liquor have been seized in raids across the city at other illegally run liquor shops, a senior excise officer said on condition of anonymity.

Seventeen policemen have been suspended for their failure to stop the illegal liquor business, Deputy Chief Minister R.R. Patil told reporters.

Liquor poisoning is common in India. To increase potency and quantity, cheap homemade brew is sometimes mixed with methyl alcohol, which can cause blindness or death. The victims are almost always the poor who cannot afford more expensive alcohol.

German sick days down

BERLIN — Germans took fewer sick days this year than ever recorded, the government said Wednesday, suggesting they are increasingly worried about losing their jobs amid high unemployment, a sluggish economy and a shrinking welfare state.

A survey of sick-day data in January-November showed absences from work at their lowest since the government began collecting data in 1970, the Health Ministry said.

Germans took an average 11.9 sick days during the period, down from 13.5 for all of 2003, the BKK health insurance association said. The 2004 full-year figure was expected to be below last year's, too, the group said.

From The Associated Press



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IN THE STATES

Rain still
pounding
California

BY JOHN ANTCAZK
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — More wet weather spread across California early Wednesday from a powerful Pacific storm that already had dumped record rainfall, spawned highway-blocking mudslides and shut off power for thousands of homes and businesses.

Several major routes remained closed in Southern California.

Northbound U.S. 101 was closed for about 20 miles because of a slide in Santa Barbara County, and snow shut down Interstate 5 at Tejon Pass north of Los Angeles. On Tuesday, the weather caused hundreds of crashes.

Heavy snow and high wind were possible Wednesday in the Sierra Nevada of Northern California. Locally heavy rain also moved into southern Nevada and parts of Arizona.

Los Angeles measured 5.55 inches of rain Tuesday, the most on record for any December day and the most for any time of the year since Jan. 26, 1956, when



LOS ANGELES TIMES/AP

Los Angeles County firefighters Sally Ortega, left, and Eddie Arguelles escort an unidentified woman from her stranded car in Harbor City, Calif., on Tuesday, after a fierce storm flooded the area.

5.71 inches fell, according to AccuWeather, which compiled National Weather Service data.

The city's wettest day on record was March 22, 1938, with 5.88 inches. The weather service started keeping records in 1877.

Twelve to 13 inches of rain fell Tuesday in the Figueroa Mountain area of Santa Barbara County and in parts of Ventura County, officials said.

The wind-driven rain was

blamed for power outages that blacked out more than 100,000 customers Tuesday in Southern California.

On Monday, San Francisco was hit by more than 3 inches of rain and Marin County got more than 7 inches. Wind gusting to more than 60 mph knocked out power to 80,000 customers in the Salinas area south of San Francisco.

Three deaths were believed to be linked to the weather, including a man who apparently tried to surf in the storm's high waves.

FDA approves new,
powerful painkiller

BY LAURA MECKLER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Patients who suffer severe chronic pain and are no longer helped by morphine will soon have a new option.

The Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday approved the first in a new class of drugs that blocks the nerve channels responsible for transmitting pain signals. It will be marketed as Prilact and should be available by the end of January.

"When you've taken all the kinds of pain medication that there is and you still have pain, that is a very frightening situation," said Dr. Lars Ekman, president of research and development for the drug's Ireland-based manufacturer, Elan. "When you have that kind of pain, there is nowhere to go."

The drug is part of a new class known as N-type calcium channel blockers. It is known chemically as ziconotide.

Morphine is standard treatment for severe pain from cancer, AIDS, amputations and other sig-

nificant illnesses, but its effects eventually wear off and the dosage must be increased. At some point, many patients switch from taking medication by mouth or by injection to a microinfusion pump implanted under the skin that delivers drugs directly into the fluid surrounding the spinal cord.

Ekman said 35,000 to 50,000 Americans have these pumps now. The FDA approved Prilact for patients who are already using these pumps but not getting effective relief from them or who cannot tolerate the available treatments.

There are side effects, and the FDA was including a "black box" warning — the government's strongest warning short of a ban. Side effects may include dizziness, drowsiness and altered mental status, with patients confused at times.

The idea for the drug came from a South Pacific snail called the Conus magus, which paralyzes its victims with venom after capturing them, the company said. Researchers set out to learn how to develop a drug based on this venom and eventually copied the amino acid sequence.

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Jerry Orbach appears in a scene from "Law & Order." Orbach died of prostate cancer Tuesday night in Manhattan. He was 69.

'Law & Order' star dead at 69

By FRAZIER MOORE

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Actor Jerry Orbach, who played a sardonic, seen-it-all cop on TV's "Law & Order" and scored on Broadway as a song-and-dance man, has died of prostate cancer at 69, a representative of the show said Wednesday.

Orbach died Tuesday night in Manhattan after several weeks of treatment, Audrey Davis of the public relations agency Lippin Group said.

When his illness was diagnosed, he had begun production on NBC's upcoming spinoff "Law & Order: Trial By Jury," after 12 seasons playing Detective Lennie Briscoe in the original series. His return to the new show had been expected early next year.

On Broadway, the Bronx-born Orbach starred in hit musicals including "Carnival," "Promises, Promises" (for which he won a Tony Award), "Chicago" and "42nd Street."

Earlier, he was in the original cast of the off-off-Broadway hit "The Fantasticks," playing the narrator. The show went on to run for more than 40 years.

Among his film appearances were roles in "Dirty Dancing," "Prince of the City" and "Crimes and Misdemeanors." Orbach is expected to appear in early episodes of "Law & Order:

Trial by Jury," for which he continued as Briscoe in a secondary role, when the series premieres later this season, Davis said.

"I'm immensely saddened by the passing of not only a friend and colleague, but a legendary figure of 20th-century show business," said Dick Wolf, creator and executive producer of the "Law & Order" series, in a statement. "He was one of the most honored performers of his generation. His loss is irreplaceable."

In a 2000 Associated Press interview, Orbach said the role in the acclaimed "Law & Order" brought him "wonderful security," rare in the life of an actor.

"All my life, since I was 16, I've been wondering where that next job was gonna come from," he explained. "Now I take the summer off, relax, and I know that at the end of July we're gonna start another season."

He said he didn't know "where I stop and Lennie starts, really... I know he's tougher than me and he carries a gun. And I'm not an alcoholic."

"I know I wouldn't want to be him," Orbach summed up. "I guess THAT'S where I stop and he starts."

"There's a pace in 'I TV I like,'" he said in a 1993 interview.

"I like to work fast. I don't like to dwell all day over one scene as you do in a big feature. Big feature films are another world."

Agencies don't agree on how to integrate fingerprint database

By CURT ANDERSON

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Disagreements between government agencies are hampering efforts to combine U.S. immigration and law enforcement fingerprint information, making it more difficult to prevent known terrorists and criminals from entering the country, according to a Justice Department review released Wednesday.

Despite some progress, the Justice, State and Homeland Security departments continue to clash over such fundamental questions as whether two or 10 fingers should be printed at U.S. borders and which law enforcement agencies should have access to the information.

The review by Glenn A. Fine, the Justice Department inspector general, also found that watch

lists should to check visitors at the borders contain only a portion of the 47 million records in FBI fingerprint files — the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System, or IAFIS — and that the lists are prone to error.

"The majority of visitors to the United States are still not checked against the FBI's IAFIS Criminal Master File, which is the most complete and current law enforcement database," Fine said in the report.

This lack of immediate access, Fine added, "creates a risk that a terrorist could enter the country undetected."

An internal Justice Department study found in August that 73 percent of criminal foreigners encountered at Border Patrol stations and other port of entry could be detected through only the FBI database, the smaller one relied upon by the Homeland

Security Department — known as the Automated Biometric Identification System, or IDENT.

Fine said key decisions must be made quickly by the agencies involved, including which people should be subjected to fingerprinting, what standards and databases should be used and who will have access to the information. On average, about 118,000 daily U.S. visitors will be subjected to the screening.

In a written response, Homeland Security Undersecretary for Transportation and Border Security Asa Hutchinson agreed that more refinements are needed but disagreed with several of Fine's 11 recommendations.

Paul Cortis, the Justice Department's top administrative official, said he hoped the report would help resolve the disagreements, particularly involving the standards to be used for fingerprinting.

3 killed in building explosion

RAMSEY, Minnesota — An explosion leveled a small commercial building, killing three workers and critically injuring a fourth.

The blast Tuesday in this Minneapolis suburb carved the single-story building into its empty base, sheriff's Capt. Robert Aldrich said. The site was strewn with concrete chunks, cinderblocks and shreds of office furniture.

A gas leak was the most likely cause of the explosion, but nothing was immediately ruled out, Aldrich said.

The building housed a real estate business and bank offices.

Plant explodes injuring 14

MUSKOGEE, Okla. — A scrap metal plant in eastern Oklahoma exploded Tuesday evening, sending fiery debris into the air and blowing out windows of nearby homes.

Two of the four people working at the Yaffe Iron and Metals plant at the time remained unaccounted for, and at least 14 people were injured, four seriously, officials said.

Debris from the plant was tossed up to 10 blocks away and a nearby shopping center was damaged, said Michélan Ooten, a spokeswoman for the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management.

From The Associated Press

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Author and activist Sontag dies

Famed writer, 71, battled cancer for many years

BY HILLEL ITALIE
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Susan Sontag, a leading intellectual and activist of the past half century who influenced the way many thought about art, illness and photography, died Tuesday. She was 71.

Sontag died at 7:10 a.m. Tuesday, said Esther Carver, a spokeswoman for Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in Manhattan. Her son, David Rieff, said the cause was complications of acute myelogenous leukemia, one of the deadliest forms of leukemia.

Sontag had suffered off and on from cancer since the 1970s.

"I knew Susan since 1962 and I know how much she suffered and how brave she was facing her illness," fellow author Carlos Fuentes told The Associated Press in Mexico City.

Tall and commanding, her very presence suggested grand, passionate drama: eyes the richest brown; thick black hair accented by a bolt of white; the voice deep and assured; her expression a severe stare or a wry smile, as if amused by a joke only she could tell.

She wrote a best-selling historical novel, "The Volcano Lover," and in 2000 won the National Book Award for the historical novel "In America." But her greatest literary impact was as an essayist.

Her 1964 piece, "Notes on Camp," which established her as a major new writer, popularized the "so bad it's good" attitude toward popular culture, applicable to everything from "Swan Lake" to feather boas. In "Against Interpretation," this most analytical of writers worried that critical analysis interfered with art's "incantatory, magical" power.

She also wrote such influential works as "Illness as Metaphor," in which she examined how disease had been alternatively romanticized and demonized, and "On Photography," in which she argued pictures sometimes distance viewers from the subject matter. "On Photography" received a National Book Critics Circle award in 1978. "Regarding the Pain of Others," a partial refutation of "On Photography," was an NBCC finalist in 2004.

Sontag was deeply involved in politics and campaigned relentlessly for human rights. From 1987-89, she served as president of the American chapter of the writers organization PEN.

When the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini called for Salman Rushdie's death because



"Susan Sontag was a great literary artist, a fearless and original thinker, ever valiant for truth, and an indefatigable ally in many struggles."

Salman Rushdie
author

Writer and intellectual
Susan Sontag, shown in
1992, died Tuesday of
leukemia. She was 71.

AP

of the alleged blasphemy of Rushdie's "The Satanic Verses," Sontag helped lead protests in the literary community.

"She was a true friend in need," Rushdie said in a statement Tuesday. "Susan Sontag was a great literary artist, a fearless and original thinker, ever valiant for truth, and an indefatigable ally in many struggles."

Fuentes praised Sontag's "devotion to literature, her courage, which she demonstrated once and again in political matters in Vietnam and Sarajevo," in the policies of the Bush administration, in her books on AIDS, on illness as a metaphor.

Sontag campaigned relentlessly for human rights. In 1993, she visited Sarajevo and staged a production of "Waiting for Godot."

Bosnian film director Haris Pasovic, who worked with her on the play, called Sontag's death "a great loss for the entire world."

Speaking Wednesday in Sarajevo, he called her "a rebel, a fighter for the truth

and at the same time an artist in every sense of the word."

The daughter of a fur trader, Sontag was born Susan Rosenblatt in New York in 1933. She spent her early years in Tucson, Ariz., and Los Angeles. Her mother was an alcoholic; her father died when she was 5. Her mother later married an Army officer, Capt. Nathan Sontag.

Susan Sontag skipped three grades and graduated from high school at 15. She met her husband, Philip Rieff, a social psychologist and historian, at the University of Chicago. Their son, David, was born in 1962, they divorced by the mid-1960s, and Sontag had emerged in New York's literary society.

Sontag also wrote and directed the films "Duet for Cannibals," "Brother Carl" and "Promised Lands" and wrote the play "Alice in Bed." Sontag appeared as herself in Woody Allen's mock documentary "Zelig."

In 1999, she wrote an essay for "Women," a compilation of portraits by her longtime companion, photographer Annie Leibovitz.

Fire in historic building

CHEYENNE, Wyo.—A fire that broke out in a bakery heavily damaged an entire block of historic buildings, including the one where Wild West gunslinger Tom Horn was said to have confessed to murder.

The fire erupted in the three- and four-story buildings late Monday. Firefighters thought several times they had it under control only to encounter smoke elsewhere along the block.

The fire was brought under control Tuesday afternoon. Eleven city blocks were closed off during the fire but authorities were reopening all but two blocks where it was uncertain whether the old facades were stable.

No injuries were reported. The cause of the fire was not immediately known.

No asteroid coming in 2029

PASADENA, Calif.—Additional observations have ruled out the chance that a recently discovered asteroid, believed to be about 1,300 feet long, could hit Earth in 2029, NASA scientists said.

Last week, asteroid 2004 MN4 had been given a small chance of impacting Earth, based on observations in June and again this month. Astronomers then began independent efforts to find earlier observations of the asteroid.

The Spacewatch Observatory near Tucson, Ariz., found faint pictures of the asteroid in archival images dating to March 15, the Near Earth Object Program Office, located at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, said in a statement on its Web site this week.

The pictures from March allowed scientists to refine the asteroid's projected trajectory.

Climber lost in Calif. rescued

MOUNT SHASTA, Calif.—When the snow on Mount Shasta became much heavier than James Aldrich expected, the experienced mountaineer

climber knew he was in trouble.

Aldrich, a 46-year-old from central New York, hunkered down in his tent on Christmas Day and waited out the storm before finally being saved by a Siskiyou County sheriff's team Tuesday.

"It was an experience. One of a lifetime," Aldrich said.

There were a lot of things that happened that I believe were not attributed to my skill. Some people call it luck. I saw the grace of God.

Aldrich climbed down about 2,000 feet when the storm began to clear Monday afternoon and then made contact with rescuers Tuesday and was recovered.

Aldrich



Sontag was an unpredictable intellectual

NEW YORK — As she lay ill last summer following a bone marrow transplant, Susan Sontag would listen to music, keep up on current events and indulge a passion seemingly too light for one of the world's leading intellectuals: Hollywood musicals of the 1930s, '40s and '50s.

"It was a whole era she hadn't watched; she was more interested in foreign films," said her close friend Sharon DeLano, a writer and editor who visited often with Sontag over the last months of her life. "That's how she was to the end, always wanting to learn new things."

Sontag, who died Tuesday at age 71 of complications of acute myelogenous leukemia, was both the most rarefied and the least predictable of thinkers, drawn to the demands of high art but open to the kick of popular culture.

Her fame began with her 1964 essay, "Notes on Camp." Over the next 40 years, she was immersed in foreign films, the photographic imagination, science fiction, avant-garde theater and the compatible pleasures of a Rauschenberg painting and the music of Diana Ross and the Supremes.

Sontag had an insatiable passion for literature, with thousands of books — arranged by chronology and language — occupying,

and defining, her New York apartment. She read writers from all over the world and is credited with introducing such European intellectuals as Roland Barthes and Elias Canetti to American readers.

"One of the things so sad about her death is she represents something that I'm afraid that's passing," said fellow author Francine Prose. "I don't think that many people these days say, 'Oh, I want to be an intellectual when I grow up.'"

Writing in the 1960s about the Vietnam War, Sontag declared "the white race is the cancer of human history." Days after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, she criticized U.S. foreign policy and offered backhanded praise for the hijackers.

"Where is the acknowledgment that this was not a 'cowardly' attack on 'civilization' or 'liberty' or 'humanity' or 'the free world' but an attack on the world's self-proclaimed superpower, undertaken as a consequence of specific American alliances and actions?" she wrote in The New Yorker.

"In the matter of courage (a morally neutral virtue): whatever may be said of the perpetrators of Tuesday's slaughter, they were not cowards."

— Hillel Italie

A 'Times Square' in Kansas

MANHATTAN, Kan.—New York, eat your heart out.

It goes the message from this heartland town known as the Little Apple, where a New Year's event modeled after the one in Times Square is planned.

Organizers of the second annual Little Apple New Year's Eve Celebration and Ball Drop expect attendance to balloon this year.

Kate Watson, an organizer of the Little Apple celebration, said there has been a 70 percent increase in traffic this year at the event's Web site. She said she's hoping last year's crowd of 4,800 revelers will grow to 8,000.

A five-foot-diameter aluminum ball will be lowered at the New Year's Eve celebration from a 20-foot-tall marquee at a Manhattan bookstore.

From The Associated Press

Clinton library has Litte Rock hopping

BY DAVID HAMMER
The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — The future of the Clinton Presidential Center — of anticipated tourism, of architectural achievement, of a dynamic regional business engine — comes into focus at Sunday brunch in the museum restaurant, Cafe 42.

The sparsely decorated, chrome-lined dining area fills by noon, which isn't surprising, considering Cafe 42 — so named because Bill Clinton was the 42nd president — had drawn more than 5,000 diners in its first 27 days of business.

Walking through the \$18.95 all-you-can-eat brunch line, partaking of fresh baby zucchini and starburst squash, Peruvian chili potatoes and Muhammad Ali's bread pudding, is a family spending a few days in Little Rock and a couple passing through on the nearby interstate.

"It's a great brunch because you have Clinton's enchiladas

and biscuits and gravy, but you also have this baby squash," said Terry Hendricks of Oakland, Calif., wearing a sweat shirt and Oakland Raiders cap.

Bill and Pat Cantrell of Lubbock, Texas, stopped at the library on their way to Branson, Mo. The cafe sits under the bridge-shaped museum building that's cantilevered over the banks of the Arkansas River.

"I don't know why people call it a glorified trailer," Cantrell said. "With all this stainless steel, marble and glass, it's more like a space module. And not many places are lucky enough to have a river like this."

All this makes Clinton Foundation president Skip Rutherford recover the pitchman's giddiness that he exhibited so often during the construction of the \$165 million Clinton Center.

"The best part is the interstate traffic," he said. "That's going to keep us riding the wave."

Brian Rogers, manager of the new 150-room Holiday Inn Presi-



Clinton Foundation president Skip Rutherford said the Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock, Ark., is drawing new visitors to the state, from not-usual markets including New York, Los Angeles, Washington-Baltimore, San Francisco-Oakland and Atlanta.

dential Center across Interstate 30, said he set lodging records in November and sold out the entire week of the opening, but has been pleasantly surprised to see the returns are not diminishing.

"We're seeing an increase of eight to 12 new rooms a night, and they're coming in without a reservation, saying they're stopping to see the library," Rogers said.

"I expect it to keep up."

The library was open only four hours the Sunday before Christmas, but 850 people paid the \$7 adult or \$5 senior admission charge, special events director Tyler Denton said. Last 70,000 have toured the library, not counting the estimated 25,000 guests who braved bone-chilling rain at the Nov. 18 opening, the foundation said.

Rutherford said he is comparing visitor demographics with the Arkansas Parks and Tourism Department's to see if the library is opening new markets.

A study of 20,000 visitors' ZIP codes revealed heavy attendance from New York, Los Angeles, Washington-Baltimore, San Francisco-Oakland and Atlanta, none of which are in the top 10 in an analysis of overall Arkansas tourism.

S.C. finds hurricanes took heavy toll on sea turtles

BY SAMMY FRETWELL
Knight Ridder Newspapers

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Biologists who tried to save imperiled sea turtles at Cape Island last summer have grim news: Nearly 9,000 baby turtles died after hurricanes raked the coast.

Despite efforts to protect the loggerhead turtles, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found that just 62 percent of the eggs hatched following hurricanes and tropical storms at the undeveloped barrier island north of Charleston.

In a normal year, about 80 percent of the island's eggs would hatch, the service said.

Cape Island, in the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, is one of the most important sea turtle nesting sites in South Carolina. About one-third of the nests established in the state are built in the sand dunes of Cape Island.

This year's losses mark the worst sea turtle hatching season in about five years.

"If we didn't have hurricanes last summer, we probably would have produced many more hatchlings," said federal biologist Sarah Dawsey.

Dawsey and Sally Murphy, a loggerhead researcher with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, said losing tur-

ties at Cape Island was particularly painful in 2004.

Loggerhead sea turtles laid far fewer nests from Florida to North Carolina than they typically do during the summer.

Overall in South Carolina, about 1,100 nests were laid in 2004, in recent years, between 2,000 and 3,000 nests have been established, Murphy said. Murphy thinks cooler ocean temperatures chilled breeding among loggerhead sea turtles.

The reptile, which can live 75 years and weigh 350 pounds, is listed by the federal government as a threatened species. It is found from the Florida Keys to Virginia dur-

ing the summer, its prime nesting season. For more than two decades, loggerhead populations have declined as a result of pollution, overdevelopment of beaches and commercial fishing.

That's part of the reason Dawsey spent days last summer trying to dig out sea turtles buried deep sand from the season's hurricanes.

Dawsey said the work she and others did to free baby sea turtles was worth it, even though many of the infant reptiles apparently were smothered or drowned from over-washing waves.

"When things like this happen, it's disappointing, but you do all you can do. You just have to accept this."



Students at Woodbury Middle School show their choice for milk containers at lunch in Salem, N.H. Encouraged by a milk industry study that shows children drink more dairy when it comes in round plastic bottles, a growing number of schools are ditching those clumsy paper half-pint cartons for single-serving plastic bottles.

Milk in bottles not just for babies

BY J.M. HIRSCH
The Associated Press

Yet another familiar school-days object may be going the way of the inkwell and the slide rule.

Encouraged by a milk industry study that shows children drink more dairy when it comes in round plastic bottles, a growing number of schools are ditching those clumsy paper half-pint cartons many of us grew up with.

Already more than 1,250 schools have switched to single-serving bottles. While that is still a tiny fraction of the nation's schools, it is a significant jump from 2000, when there were none, according to the National Dairy Council.

"Those damn square containers are awful hard for kids," says New Hampshire Agriculture Commissioner Steve Taylor, who has watched the trend spread to some 320 schools in New England.

"Teachers say you can spend the whole lunch period just walking around and opening those containers."

Though plastic long has been the favored packaging for soda and other drinks, schools sought bottled milk only after a 2002 Dairy Council study found milk consumption increased 18 percent in schools that tested bottles. The study also found that children who drank bottled milk finished more of it.

The change to plastic brings schools closer to overall milk packaging trends. In 2001, more than 82 percent of the nation's milk was packaged in plastic, up from 15 percent in 1971, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

While the growing use of bottles in schools can partly be attributed to ease — educators say plastic caps are easier for children to open, and round bottles fit better

in their hands — marketing savvy deserves at least as much credit.

Several years ago the milk industry decided its boxes were not visually competitive when sold alongside the relatively sexy bottles of juice and soda increasingly common in schools.

Now, many schools display the bottles in glass-front upright coolers — just like at the convenience store.

Fast-food chains Wendy's and McDonald's recently replaced their milk cartons with bottles and sales soared.

Bottles also could be a financial boon for school lunch programs, which depend on meal sales to stay afloat. Though bottled milk costs schools more, Grant Prentice, executive vice president of marketing for the Dairy Council, says high schools that served it during the study saw lunch program participation increase nearly 5 percent.

Time's a most up for renters on park land

BY BEN FOX

The Associated Press

CRYSTAL COVE STATE PARK, Calif. — Residents of a mobile home park on the Pacific Ocean have long enjoyed a low-cost version of the California dream, paying hundreds in rent on million-dollar real estate.

But for 25 years, they knew the clock was ticking on that dream: The state, which owns the land under their homes, would eventually ask them to leave so it could expand the surrounding Crystal Cove State Park and allow public access to undeveloped back country and pristine shoreline.

The day of reckoning has arrived: Barring a last-minute court reprieve, nearly 300 families who rent at El Morro Village mobile home park must give up their homes in one of the most expensive areas in the United States.

"It's the end of a romantic era when you could live in a funky little beach place for a little bit of money," said Greg Wise, 49, whose father's mobile home got since 1974. "It's sad."

Resident Vicki Gorham says some rents — the number is

in dispute — are on fixed incomes and will have to move far inland to find a place they can afford. Residents pay between about \$400 and \$1,200 per month for rent, depending on the size and location of their lot.

The mobile homes sit inside Crystal Cove State Park between ritzy Laguna Beach and Newport Beach, where few houses sell for less than \$1 million.

California bought the land from a developer in 1979 for \$32 million, at the time the most expensive purchase ever for the state park system. The state didn't have the money to fully develop the park then, so it made a deal with the mobile home residents: They could stay for two decades on month-to-month leases in lieu of relocation payments. When the 20 years was up, the state still was not ready and extended the leases five years — until Dec. 31.

The park includes 2,400 acres of back country and seven coves of 3.2 miles of smooth beach and tide pools. Coyotes and threatened shore birds roam the sand. Dolphins, sea lions and the occasional gray whale can be spotted from 80-foot bluffs that shelter



Residents of El Morro Village mobile home park, which sits inside Crystal Cove State Park, Calif., face eviction from the site that is in one of the most expensive areas in the United States.

the coves from the bustle of nearby coastal Highway 1.

There are areas set aside for fishing, diving and surfing in coves once used by bootleggers to smuggle booze and by Hollywood to film deserted beach scenes.

A state judge ruled earlier this month that the El Morro tenants

had adequate notice and that evictions could proceed. Residents filed an emergency appeal of that decision and also are hoping for a favorable ruling in a federal lawsuit challenging the state's compliance with environmental regulations.

The state has said it will begin

eviction proceedings on Jan. 17, after a hearing in federal court.

Ken Kramer, park superintendent, who has worked at the park since the state acquired it, said he sympathizes with the tenants.

"There's tears and heartbreak, but it's time to move forward," he said.

Mammoth tooth not rare, but it's huge

BY LINDA MAN

Knight Ridder Newspapers

Steve and Debbie Gliddehaus just wanted to dig a lake in their back yard last summer when they found what experts thought was a 50,000-year-old mastodon skeleton.

But as paleontologists from the University of Kansas continued to study the Grain Valley, Kan., site, puzzles emerged. The bones were buried under 50 to 60 feet of clay. The presence of the animal's teeth, Mammoths from Ice Age had melted and washed the clay to Grain Valley. But glaciers were much farther north 50,000 years ago.

"The tooth was absolutely definitive," said Craig Sundell, the paleontologist who is leading the dig.

The thickness of the enamel and the number of ridges on the molar provide a rough estimate of the animal's age. Mammoths from Asia crossed into North America about 1.7 million years ago.

Sundell said the area that is now Grain Valley was very different 500,000 years ago. The land was covered with spruce and birch trees.

Giant sloths, the size of Kodiak



KANSAS CITY STAR/KRT

Vertebrate paleontologist Craig Sundell holds a 9-inch, 5-pound fossilized molar that was found in August 2004. Scientists say the tooth belonged to a mammoth that lived 500,000 to 1 million years ago.

bears, lived alongside armadillos that were as big as black bears. Saber-tooth cats and dire wolves also roamed the area.

Scientists said they initially thought the buried animal was a mastodon, because such skeletons were more common. When scientists learned the mammoth was more than 500,000 years old, its age also explained the presence of the clay at the site.

Wakfield Dorf, a retired University of Kansas professor of geology, said glacial ice, at that time, had advanced as far south as what is now Lee's Summit, Mo.

While mammoth bones are not rare, to most people they are quite a novelty.

Debbie Gliddehaus said about 200 schoolchildren have visited the site.

Police force welcomes bloodhounds

BY KIM O'BRIEN ROOT

Daily Press

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. — The big, slobbery red dog starts jumping around as soon as Tom Zeidler pulls on his tan and orange vest. She knows there are treats in the pocket.

But Isabel — or Izzie, as she's affectionately known — knows the vest also means it's time to go to work. Once her own harness is strapped on, the word SEARCH standing out against a bright orange patch, she's at attention, ready and waiting.

With a sniff of a cloth and the order "find" from Zeidler, the 65-pound bloodhound takes off across Riverview Farm Park, using a single scent to find a person hiding about a half-mile away. After less than 10 minutes of keeping her nose to the ground, leading the handler across the gently sloping terrain and along a tree line, Izzie finds her target hiding in some reeds.

She jumps up on the man and looks back at Zeidler, pride evident on her wrinkly, jowly face. And yes, she gets a treat.

Isabel, the Newport News Police Department's first bloodhound in about 20 years, is putting a different doggy face on the Peninsula's K-9 units, which traditionally have included mostly German shepherds.

Since Izzie began training in October 2003, two more bloodhounds have joined the police ranks — a second dog in Newport News and one in Hampton.

Already, the dogs' sensitive snouts are sniffing as they should. Last month, the Hampton Police Division's Sarah — a 5-year-old bloodhound donated in March by the Virginia Department of Corre-



Newport News, Va., police K-9 team dog trainer Tom Zeidler walks with Isabel, aka Izzie, on Wednesday during a training exercise.

tions — trailed a scent from downtown Phoebus to a house where a bank-robbery suspect had been hiding.

Inside the car was the suspect. "She played an integral part in the capture of the suspect," Hampton police Cpl. James West said. "She's already showing her worth." Most police departments tend to use German shepherds, Rottweilers, Belgian Malinois and Labrador retrievers. Those dogs can be trained to sniff out drugs and explosives as well as go after a fleeing suspect or provide backup for an officer.

"The poor bloodhound, he's so simple-minded, he can just do one thing," said Buck Garner, vice president of the Virginia Bloodhound Search and Rescue Association and a detective with the Louisiana County Sheriff's Office. "They can smell."

Bloodhounds aren't particularly

bright dogs, trainers say, but their uniquely shaped heads and olfactory glands make them good sniffers. Their large noses easily pick up a scent. Their jaws hold that scent in their folds and their long, floppy ears stir up odors on the ground. Even their slobber comes in handy — the spit wets and activates smells.

What makes them different is that they can single out one scent — even if it's days or months old — and stay with it for miles.

While Newport News intends to use its second bloodhound, Dakota, for police work, Izzie will be used solely as a search-and-rescue dog — which was the reason for getting her. Last year, a group of doctors from the Peninsula pooled their money to buy a bloodhound and train one for search and rescue.

Hampton's dog will also be used for mostly search and rescue, although she rides with a police officer and will be used as needed.

Club faces fine

GA ATLANTA — The mayor is threatening a country club with up to \$90,000 in fines for refusing to extend spousal benefits to the partners of gay members.

Mayor Shirley Franklin said in a letter to the Druid Hills Golf Club that the club violated Atlanta's human rights ordinance, which requires businesses to treat domestic partners registered with the city as married couples.

Franklin said she is ordering the city solicitor to fine the club \$500 a day for up to six months — a total of \$90,000 — unless the rule is changed. The solicitor will decide when the fines will begin.

Windy business

MA BOSTON — Town leaders in the Cape Cod community of Yarmouth have been on record opposing the wind farm proposed for the waters off its beaches, even passing a resolution two years ago expressing their disapproval for the plan to erect 130 wind turbines in Nantucket Sound.

But the Yarmouth Board of Selectmen also quietly negotiated with Cape Wind Associates for a raft of benefits worth millions. If the \$700 million project gets federal tax credit approval, underwater transmission lines would come ashore in Yarmouth and tie into the electrical grid.

"We did it essentially to protect Yarmouth," said Suzanne McAuliffe, chairwoman of the Board of Selectmen. "We don't have a say in the actual wind farm, whether it's going to happen or not."

Botulism sales banned

FL FORT LAUDERDALE — Two doctors and their Arizona company were barred from selling an unapproved botulinum toxin believed to have paralyzed four people who used it instead of Botox, the popular anti-wrinkle treatment.

Doctors Chad Livdahl and Zarah Karim, of Toxin Research International Inc., do not have government approval for the "use, sale, marketing and promotion" of the toxin for treating wrinkles, according to a statement from U.S. Attorney Marcos Jimenez in Miami.

An emergency restraining order against the company and doctors also covers three sister companies: Powderz Inc., The Cosmetic Pharmacy Inc. and Z Spa Inc.

Language barrier

VT BURLINGTON — Advocates for Vermont's growing number of foreign language interpreters say the workers need legal protection so they won't have to testify in court about their jobs.

Sylvia Delcastillo-Alzamora, a Spanish-English translator, says testifying about her work "would be betraying the ethics of the profession."

Professional interpreters adhere to a code, she said, that prohibits them from publicly discussing or offering opinions about their conversations with clients.

Recently, Vermont law offers foreign-language interpreters no protection from being called as witnesses in cases in which they



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

were first asked to translate words from one language to another.

Suspected pot in trailer

AR VAN BUREN — After he ran from police twice, authorities have arrested a Massachusetts man who is accused of carrying 27 packages of suspected marijuana nested in bales of hay inside a horse trailer.

State police say Evertton Garriques was a passenger in the vehicle pulling the trailer, which also contained two horses. More than 800 pounds of suspected marijuana was found in the Christmas Day stop.

Arkansas State Police Cpl. Olen Craig stopped the pickup truck for speeding and having no license plate light, an ASP dispatcher said.

Man survives fall

OH MEDINA — A man whose car plunged 30 feet off a highway overpass and landed wheels down in the snow-covered median between lanes of freeway traffic escaped with only minor injuries.

"The front air bag deployed and right after that I felt a floating sensation," Michael Doner said. "I thought, 'I'm either dreaming or I'm falling.'"

Doner, 60, of Medina, was making the three-hour drive to visit his mother on Christmas when a

car skidded into his and a second car slammed into him, sending his car over the railing of the bridge over Interstate 71 about 30 miles southwest of Cleveland.

Doner had a broken collarbone and cracked ribs, and was sent home less than six hours after the fall.

"I'm very lucky," he said. "The guy upstairs was looking out for me."

Elvis' backwash

NC BELMONT — Wade Jones likes Elvis, but he insists he's just a casual fan.

That's why, after watching a grilled cheese sandwich thought to be embedded with the image of the Virgin Mary fetch \$28,000 on eBay, he decided to part with three tablespoons of water from a cup he says Elvis Presley used during a concert.

"It's one thing to be an Elvis fan, but then you tell them you have this cup and water and they think you're a fanatic," he said. "I'm not like the people bidding on this water."

Jones was 13 when he went to see the aging Elvis in February 1977 at the old Charlotte Coliseum, which is now Cricket Arena. He saw the pop icon drink from the cup and, after the show, asked a police officer for it.

As proof of its authenticity, Jones provides photos of Elvis during the concert in which cups can be seen.

Found after 23 years

CA SACRAMENTO — A vintage 1963 Ford Fairlane stolen 23 years ago from Greenville, S.C., has turned up some 2,600 miles away in California.

California Highway Patrol officers called Terry and Robin Smith to tell them authorities had recovered the vehicle.

"What a wonderful gift at Christmastime... after 23 years to receive news that they'd found our car," Robin Smith said.

Someone brought the car into the CHP's San Bernardino office for inspection. A sharp-eyed officer noticed the car's identification number didn't match and began investigating.

CHP's Lt. Greg Williams said authorities don't believe the people who brought the car in had anything to do with the theft.

Smith said the car was a wedding gift from her parents, but the couple have not decided whether to bring it home or sell it in California.

Ferret recovery efforts

AZ PHOENIX — Endangered black-footed ferrets are reproducing more and surviving longer in the wild in Arizona than they have since recovery efforts began nearly a decade ago, wildlife biologists say.

Biologists found 28 ferrets in the last two years in Arizona that were born in the wild — more than double the number born during any two-year period since a reintroduction program began in 1996.

"The success in Arizona is great," said Mike Lockhart, a ferret recovery coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"It continues along the same path, it could quickly become a self-sustaining population."



Horsing around

Horses play in their pasture at Sweet Tree Farm in Dummerston, Wt.



Mill in the mist

Smoke rises from the International Steel Group steelmill in Sparrows Point, Md.



Supporting the arts

Workers with Premier Outdoor Enterprises Inc. support extensions as they work on a billboard for the Kansas City Ballet in Kansas City, Mo.



Surf's up

Thomas Chapman of Long Beach, Calif., sits on the sand south of the Seal Beach, Calif., pier as he rests between rides on his body board.



Little big shot

Matthew Witt, 1, looks at the hoop as he plays basketball in Carey Park while enjoying the day with his parents, Michael and Debra, in Hutchinson, Kan.



Wind riders

Three monk parakeets brace themselves against a stiff breeze as they perch on a wire in Surfside, Fla.

Surrogate of 3 at 55

VA RICHMOND — A 55-year-old woman acting as a surrogate for her daughter gave birth to triplets.

Tina Cade, who already had three children, delivered the babies by Caesarean section at Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital.

She had carried the babies for her oldest daughter, Camille Hammond, who suffers from endometriosis, a condition affecting the lining of the uterus that makes it difficult to become pregnant.

Hammond and her husband, both doctors at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, had tried for four years to become pregnant.

Cade started hormone treatment last winter, and in the spring she underwent test-tube fertilization. Three embryos were implanted and all three survived.

"We didn't plan for triplets," Cade said recently. "I thought we would be blessed with one. It was quite a surprise."

Christmas mail stolen

ND FARGO — Police say thieves pried open banks of mailboxes in at least 19 apartment buildings on this city's south side over the holiday, probably looking for money in Christmas cards.

Authorities say the thieves gained access to the mail of more than 100 tenants. They're still trying to determine how much was stolen.

Woodlands preserved

VT BRATTLEBORO — A group of townspeople has raised the money needed to buy 31 acres of woodlands in the heart of the town that will be preserved as a popular area for hikers and cross country skiers.

Ownership of the land was transferred to the nonprofit Windham Foundation and the Vermont Land Trust, and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board holds an easement on the land.

"For the past 20 or 30 years, the land has been unofficially used for hikes and nature walks," explained Tom Marten of Brattleboro, a member of the group Friends of the Western Avenue Woodlands, which formed last year to conserve the land. "This is land that ought to be conserved so it can continue to be used."

The land — which was mostly pasture just more than 100 years ago — is known to have plenty of deer, birds and some aquatic life.

Search after smell

CO BOULDER — A bank teller's nose led authorities to a substantial marijuana-growing operation.

An employee at the First National Bank of Colorado called authorities after processing several cash deposits that reeked of the illegal weed. The Boulder County Drug Task Force followed up the tip with a search of a home that resulted in the discovery of more than 6 pounds of packaged marijuana and 270 plants and pieces of plants.

Michael Bruce Bliss, 30, was arrested at the home and has been charged in the case. Bliss fre-

quented the bank weekly, according to a search warrant, with deposits of \$20 bills in amounts of \$800 to \$1,500.

Flouride fight

AR LITTLE ROCK — A fight is brewing over a legislator's suggestion that the state's water supply be fluoridated.

Rep. Tommy Roebuck said he may introduce a bill to require all communities to fluoridate their water.

Opponent Sherry Johnson, president of the Arkansas Health Freedom Coalition, said, "If you want fluoride, go to the dentist and get fluoride."

School's board panel

AL AUBURN — A panel reviewing 30 names to fill a single vacancy on the Auburn University board of trustees expects to select its choice by Feb. 1, when the Legislature meets.

The five-member trustee selection panel has begun interviews for the at-large vacancy. The Alabama Senate will vote on their choice.

Election baby welcomed

NH MERIDITH — A couple who stopped at Town Hall to vote just hours before the birth of their son have been rewarded for their loyalty by President Bush, who penned a personal note welcoming the baby.

Kim Dixon waited in the car while her husband, Shawn, dropped off their absentee ballots on Nov. 2. Tyler McPherson Dixon arrived at 6:43 p.m., weighing in at 9 lbs.

"In the late stages of labor, our only entertainment was watching the election returns," Shawn Dixon said.

In the days before Tyler's birth, Dixon had drawn a portrait of the president, framed it and mailed it to the White House with a letter thanking Bush for keeping America safe and telling him about the baby.

"We wanted to do something to say thank you. We were concerned about bringing him into the world. He was the guy making us feel safe," Dixon said.

Schools to combine

WA EVERETT — Five Christian schools are combining to create a new school system in Snohomish County and north Seattle.

The schools have more than 1,200 students. By combining resources, school officials hope to offer more specialized classes such as advanced placement courses for college-bound students.

Hot line shut down

RI PROVIDENCE — The state's AIDS hot line is going dead after 18 years.

It has experienced less demand as people seek treatment elsewhere. The hot line received up to 5,000 calls a year until the mid-1990s but only about 500 this year.

Callers will instead reach a national hot line operated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Stories and photos from wire services

YOUR MONEY

Free agents' fields go green

Contractors sitting pretty in the new business model

BY JANE S. HILL

The Dallas Morning News

DALLAS — When Gordon Davis calls himself "a pirate in the sea of capitalism," he's not talking about plundering trade secrets. He's an information technology contractor, charting his own course in search of gold.

Changes in the way companies do business — looking to outside talent to tackle IT projects — create work for independent contractors, such as Davis. As a result, more IT professionals are learning the ins and outs of contracting.

At CareerConnection, a Dallas-based support group for job seekers, Dallas Miller fields inquiries from firms seeking IT professionals. At least 70 percent to 80 percent of those job inquiries are for contract positions, she said.

Miller calls the contractor arrangement a "dating game," in which both company and worker are spared commitment.

She understands the value of using temporary workers for seasonal employment, she said, but IT pros are not like summer lifeguards. For starters, they work on longer projects; some contracts last for years.

Veteran contractors such as Davis say they don't get attached to the projects or to the companies.

While working on a three-year contract at Micrografix Inc., he went in every day as if it could be his last. "I did the best job I could, but in the back of my mind I knew if they told me today was my last day, I would walk out with no disappointment."

Compensation is one difference. As an hourly worker at Micrografix, Davis was paid for overtime, which made the position more lucrative for him than for some salaried employees, he said. But he had no benefits. Vacation and holiday pay, as well as sick leave, are virtually nonexistent for contractors.

In a contract position at the Federal Reserve Bank, he did receive medical benefits. The



Gordon Davis, an IT contractor, advises temporary workers to stay in touch with many placement firms. He says he doesn't get attached to projects or firms. Of a recent assignment, he says: "I did the best job I could, but ... I know if they told me today was my last day, I would walk out with no disappointment."

DALLAS MORNING NEWS/RT

project lasted one year but was supposed to be longer, illustrating another vagary of being a contractor, he said.

Just as they withhold loyalty to a company, contractors also jump from one placement firm to another as standard practice.

Davis advises contractors to stay in contact with "a dozen or more" placement firms, because when the assignment is over, there's no promise of another one waiting.

Also, save money for contingencies, he said. "You have to see yourself as a small-business owner. Sometimes you're going to be living on the edge. A lot of people aren't prepared to do that."

He networks "voraciously," a requirement for any successful contractor, he said. Reading job boards alone won't get you the job, he insists.

Hiring managers would rather deal with a small number of contracting firms than sift through several thousand résumés. Also, the Fixed-Term Work Act of 2003 requires companies to treat fixed-term workers equally with permanent employees in terms of pay, pensions, benefits and other considerations. Temporary agency workers are exempt under the federal act.

Contract placement firms may hire the worker directly, issuing paycheck and taking care of tax and Social Security withholding.

Other firms pay contractors as if they are self-employed, using a 1099 form, leaving the worker to pay estimated taxes and Social Security.

John Dyer, a software developer, has been working as a contractor for most of his career, long before it was fashionable. "He advises would-be contractors to build a network of contacts in the IT industry and within their professional society. He attends local chapter meetings for the Independent Computer Consultants Association."

Dyer said. "You should be planning for your next job in any job, always asking yourself, 'What's going to happen when this job ends?'"

Marie Guthrie, vice president in the Fort Worth, Texas, office of DBM, a human resources consulting firm, refers to IT contractors as "pioneers in the new employment model" where companies have only a small core group of full-time employees and hire IT workers on a project basis.

Contracting firms may act as brokers for IT professionals, or agent managers will represent IT talent, much as agents in Hollywood promote actors. "Some forecasters say there will be on-line bidding for top talent."

From large retailers to hospitals, companies will continue to look for ways to reduce costs through improved systems, she said, requiring them to make heavy investments in technology.

IT contract professionals, working as free agents, will find themselves in the "driver's seat," Guthrie said. "The upturn has already started. This is a permanent change. The old model is not coming back."

TUESDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

INDEXES					
52-week High	Low	Name	Net Change	% Chg	YTD % Chg
10,600.51	9,700.40	Dow Jones Industrial	+184.41	+1.7	+1.7
3,803.75	2,743.46	Dow Jones Transportation	+141.62	+5.9	+26.3
3,367.93	2,598.08	Dow Jones Utilities	+335.70	+5.1	+25.76
7,229.13	6,131.33	NASDAQ Composite	+405.54	+7.2	+25.31
1,428.01	1,150.74	Amex Index	+1,426.38	+1.68	+1.21
2,171.94	1,750.82	Nasdaq Composite	+2,177.19	+22.97	+21.54
1,214.73	1,090.72	S&P 500	+1,213.54	+8.62	+7.72
559.73	545.28	S&P MidCap	662.45	+8.00	+1.22
65.72	51.90	Russell 2000	154.57	+10.23	+1.59
1,100.12	1,050.52	Russell 2000 \$500	+110.03	+1.10	+1.10

Stripes Travel



Trends show that Americans want active, challenging trips, such as hiking in the Swiss Alps, by day, and the reward of pampering in the evening.

In '05, travel gets personal

Tried and true won't do; Americans want a challenge in Europe

BY BETH J. HARPAZ
The Associated Press

A hot tub after hiking, or a spa après ski. That's what Americans want when they travel in Europe. Despite the weak dollar and despite the Madrid bombing, "soft adventure" and travel on the Continent are the two top trends as the tourism industry continues to rebound from its slump following Sept. 11, 2001.

"It's the first year since 2000 that all travel industry sectors are showing increases in demand," according to a spokesperson for the Travel Industry of America.

As the new year is about to begin, Americans have demonstrated their preference for Europe. To everybody's surprise, the weak dollar didn't keep Americans away in 2004. The year "is shaping up as the second-best year ever for travel to Europe," according to the European Travel Commission. It projects that 12.7 million Americans crossed the pond in 2004, 20

percent more than in 2003 and nearing 2000's record-setting 13.1 million. And that doesn't count travel by Americans living in Europe.

The United Kingdom and France have been the top destinations for Americans for a number of years, according to the U.S. Commerce Department, and that is not expected to change once the '04 figures are tallied.

But industry experts say Italy, Spain and Eastern Europe are catching up. U.S. arrivals in Italy are projected at 3.8 million for 2004, up from 3.4 million in 2003, according to the Italian Tourist Office, and unusual itineraries are all the rage, such as Go Ahead Vacations' "Tuscan Spa Week" (www.goaheadvacations.com) or a tour of the Italian lakes district.

And while learn-to-cook trips to Italy are trendy, Spain "has been crowned by the media as the new hot place for great food," according to Katerina Pavlitova, a member of the European Travel Commission's executive committee.

The March 11 bombing in Madrid, which killed 191 people, also had far less impact than feared. From January to October 2004, 47.5 million tourists visited Spain, 2.5 percent more than in the same period in 2003, according to Spain's Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Industry.

"Between what happened with 9/11 and what's happened since then, people have accepted that terrorism is part of our life in today's society and they will not be intimidated," said Bob Whitely, president of the U.S. Tour Operators Association.

Eastern Europe is booming as a bargain destination. Former Soviet Bloc countries have come a long way in bringing infrastructure and amenities up to Western standards, yet their prices are much lower than in Western Europe, so weak U.S. dollars go further.

Perhaps more importantly, many visitors to Eastern Europe have already been to Paris, London and the other traditional must-sees. They want something new, and they are intrigued by

the history and culture of cities such as Prague, Budapest and Krakow.

"People who go to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland are often people who first visit other capitals," said Pavlitova, who is also the director of tourism in the Czech Republic, where tourism is growing by double digits, with 12 percent of all visitors from the States.

In Africa, trips such as gorilla trekking in Rwanda are the hot sellers in 2005, according to members of the U.S. Tour Operators Association. That's typical of another trend for the new year: trips that call for more exertion than sitting poolside or peering out of a tour bus window.

"People like to have some excitement and be out there doing unusual things," said Sandra Hughes, vice president of AAA Travel. "But they also want to enjoy life."

You might be doing something strenuous during the day, but in the evenings you go to an inn with a hot tub and drink nice

wine," agreed "Outside" magazine editor Leslie Weeden. "If you're on a bicycle trip to Europe, you're staying in chateaus. ... You don't just lie on a beach and drink piña colodas. You get massages and meditate and you try to rejuvenate, whether you're learning a new skill or you're out biking or kayaking."

Weeden says popular vacations include white-water rafting trips for families and skill-building for women.

The old "If it's Tuesday, it must be Belgium" model of cramming in as many sights as possible has been replaced by in-depth, offbeat and challenging trips: walking tours, caving, rafting, volunteering, going off the beaten track.

"The American consumer has gotten far more sophisticated," said Whitely. "They're not doing the major cities. They're doing the backroads. Instead of five countries, they're doing one. Instead of five cathedrals in one day, they want time to see villages and experience the culture of the destination."

WWII sites, in person or by armchair

BY GARY A. WARNER

The Orange County Register

Driving around France in 1994 during the 50th anniversary of the D-day invasion, I looked at the scattered war sites and thought, "I really should write a guidebook to World War II sites."

But I never wrote the book, and now I don't have to. Chuck Thompson has done a much better job than I could have hoped to do.

"The 25 Best World War II Sites: European Theater" (Greenline Publications, \$19.95) should be bought by anyone interested in the subject.

All the most famous sites are here: Normandy, Berlin, Auschwitz, London, Munich, Nuremberg and Anzio, to name a few.

For the hairy traveler, there are even guides to Stalingrad (now called Volgograd), where the Soviets turned the tide of the Eastern Front; and Kursk, site of the world's biggest tank battle.

The book even lists tour companies that can take travelers to Wolf's Lair, Hitler's famed Eastern Front headquarters in East Prussia (now Poland).

Thompson's book is a fresh title in a dwindling field. My copy, the now out-of-print "March to Victory," a 1994 guidebook centering on D-day and the Battle of the Bulge, has become dog-eared. There are a few other titles, mostly by British publishers, that I have on my bookshelf, along with the reprint of the 1946 Michelin map of Normandy.

But Thompson's book goes well beyond any of these in breadth and depth. A veteran travel writer and editor, Thompson does the triage on each site, rating the historic importance and quality of exhibits.

Directions on how to get to



World War II veteran Walt Ehlers, center, visits with members of the 82nd Airborne at Omaha Beach in June.

each site are explicit — ruins of 65-year-old gun emplacements on the Siegfried Line can be difficult to find.

My favorite part of the book is the final chapter of "auxiliary sites," the lesser war sites like the Nazi U-boat submarine pens in St. Nazaire, France; the site where Italian dictator Benito Mussolini was strung up in a Piazzi Loretto in Milan; and a fascinating chapter on the massive REISE complex in Poland that has only recently been open to the public. Built by 28,000 slave laborers from a nearby concentration camp, it may have been the Nazis' center for future nuclear weaponry research.

Military enthusiasts are an often picky and picky crowd, so there are likely to be a few quibbles. By adding the "auxiliary sites" chapter, Thompson may open himself up to some second-

guessing of those who want an encyclopedic listing of war sites.

I would have liked to have seen more information on the Republic of Salo sites in north-

ern Italy where Mussolini spent the final months of his life.

The only quibble of any consequence I had with the book was the use of the spelling "Adolph"



Ehlers visits the French countryside where he fought in World War II.

WWII site guides

• "The 25 Best World War II Sites: European Theater," by Chuck Thompson (Greenline Publications, \$19.95).

• "The 25 Best World War II Sites: Pacific Theater," by Chuck Thompson (Greenline Publications, \$19.95).

Note: Neither is available through the publisher, but each can be special ordered online at sites such as www.amazon.com.

— GARY A. WARNER

for the Nazi dictator's first name. It's Adolf. It's an irritant, but still a fairly minor bump in the road.

Thompson has also written a companion volume: "The 25 Best World War II Sites: Pacific Theater." It's more of an armchair pleasure for the military traveler, since many of the key sites are on distant, rarely visited South Pacific atolls. But the book does have chapters on the Pearl Harbor sites in Hawaii.

Thompson also takes travelers to what I've found to be one of the most fascinating and little-known aspects of military travel: the World War II sites of Japan. Thompson includes the two places that the Japanese are quick to point American tourists toward: the atomic bomb sites at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Thompson also gives directions on how to visit the Kamikaze Memorial on the southern island of Kyushu, where the young pilots who willingly flew their aircraft into U.S. warships in the last stages of the war are remembered.

Together, the two books are a welcome new addition to the short shelf of military travel literature.

Distributed by Knight-Ridder/Tribune Information Services. E-mail the Orange County Register's Gary Warner at garywarner@ocregister.com.

End of bridge toll means 'new era for Skye'

BY JAMES STURCKE

The Guardian

Tourism officials expect a substantial rise in trips to Scotland's Isle of Skye after the announcement last week that the controversial toll charge on the bridge leading to the island was canceled.

The Scottish first minister Jack McConnell said the round-trip fare of 11.40 pounds — about \$22.80 — for cars and 74 pounds for buses using the bridge across Kyle Akin, the strip of water separating Skye from the mainland, was no more.

"A toll-free bridge will boost tourism and commerce, to the benefit not only of the Skye and Lochalsh economy but also across the Highlands as a whole," he said.

McConnell, who was born on the island of Arran, off the west

coast of Scotland, added: "As an islander, I am delighted that today marks the end of the discredited toll regime on the Skye bridge. This is the start of a new era for Skye. Instead of the bridge being a symbol of controversy, it can now be a symbol for growth and prosperity."

The 1½-mile-long bridge, which opened in 1955, links the mainland town Kyle of Lochalsh with Kyleakin on Skye.

Under Scotland's first private finance initiative, the bridge was designed, built and partly financed by the Skye Bridge Co. The company was to be reimbursed by tolls, which were frozen four years ago at 1999 levels. Skye Bridge will be paid around 27 million pounds (about \$52 million) by the government to buy control of the bridge, with the exact amount to be known next year when the final audited



PETER JACGER/Stars and Stripes

accounts of the company are prepared.

According to the executive, if it had not bought out the bridge, the government would have had to provide a further 18 million

pounds (about \$35 million) in subsidy, and the tolls collected in the next eight years would have totalled about 20 million pounds.

Jubilant drivers sounded their horns and waved as the news that the controversial tolls had been canceled reached them. William Easingwood, 59, a fisherman from Dunbar, was the first motorist to legally cross the bridge without paying since it opened in 1955.

"I certainly feel better for it," he said. "I only use the bridge every three weeks so it doesn't really mean that much to me, but for the locals, I am certainly happy for them."

The announcement ends a nine-year-long controversy. The tolls have been in force since midnight on Oct. 17, 1995, and have been bitterly resented by many local residents.

The bridge, which carries about 2,000 vehicles a day, was the object of a vigorous campaign of non-payment by anti-toll protesters, one of whom, named Robbie the Pig, waged a lengthy legal battle, arguing that the tolls were illegal.

A spokeswoman for the Scottish Transport Board said some motorists turned back from crossing to Skye because of the toll. An impact assessment by the Highland Council estimated the toll's end would bring benefits to the local economy worth more than 4 million pounds (about \$8 million) a year and create 256 jobs. Twenty-one workers who collected the tolls will lose their jobs.

The bridge cost 39 million pounds to build, of which 12 million was a government grant. Up to June 2003, tolls paid back about 27 million pounds.

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Right: Homes rise above Merichas Harbor on the Greek island of Kithnos.

Below: The lights of Ermopouli, Greece, reflect on the water.



A boat moves through the harbor of the Greek Island of Kithnos. The view from the boat.

A week in Greek sail

BY LISA VORDERBRUEGGEN
Contra Costa Times

Menus? Leave them for the tourists, our skipper admonishes my husband, Joe, and me as we walk into one of the half-dozen tavernas lining the marina.

"Anna! Show us the fish!" he demands. (Or at least that's what we think he said. It was all, um, Greek to us.) We meekly follow the proprietress and our skipper, Yannis Lekkas, through a swinging door into the kitchen, where Anna deftly pulls open an ice-filled drawer packed with the day's catch.

Our heads bob back and forth as, astounded, we watch the pair haggle loudly and with much hand gesturing over our culinary fate.

An hour later, we strip clean the bones of six fried red fish coated in a crispy, delectable seasoning and toast Lekkas with the ouzo sent over from a neighboring table of Swiss sailors.

And so it began, the glorious September week we sailed the Greek Isles on a 32-foot chartered sailboat, just the two of us and a hired skipper.

We pulled up anchor each morning, set a course across the Aegean Sea and moored at a different harbor every night.

Our days consisted of swim-

ming in clear water the color of jewels, strolling amidst 2,500-year-old Greek ruins and soaking up architectural, cultural and culinary delights.

All told, we landed on six islands in the Cyclades region of the Aegean — Kea, Kithnos, Siros, Mikonos, Delos and Rineia.

Neither of us had ever sailed. So what possessed us to go to sea halfway around the world? It began with a simple question.

"How far can you go on 100,000 miles?" I asked my husband, referring to the balance in his frequent flier account.

I had long dreamed of traveling to Greece, and during my research I stumbled across a Web site with a travel log written by a U.S. family that had voyaged on a chartered sailboat in the Greek Isles.

It was perfect. It appealed to our adventurous nature, but it was tame enough for a couple of middle-aged suburbanites to handle.

Our journey began in earnest with an hourlong taxi ride from downtown Athens to the port of Lavrio, where we met our skipper and inspected the *Flyra*, our floating home for the week.

The first task was to get provisions for the sailboat.

We climbed into the back of an old, rusted van that ferried folks

from the marina to the village store, perched on a couple of milk crates and held on.

Inside the tiny market, we stood frozen for a few seconds as we looked at the shelves stacked with unrecognizable packages. Uh, what's the Greek word for sugar? Thank goodness, a group of friendly and knowledgeable Brits also on a sailing holiday joined us in the store and the grocery clerk spoke English. (Most Greeks we talked with spoke English and loved to help people learn Greek.) We still didn't get it quite right.

I awoke after our first night aboard to face my first lesson under a Greek skipper's command: Coffee is very important. And I had bought the wrong kind. We had a French press coffee pot on board, but I mistakenly bought the finely ground Greek-style coffee that required boiling.

Fortunately, a sailor knows how to improvise, and he taught me to enjoy the sweet, thick Greek coffee.

It was the first of many things Lekkas would teach us that week. A veteran sailor in his early 50s with a wry sense of humor and a classic Greek profile, he was more than our skipper; he was our culture coach.

We watched him closely and learned to eat dinner when



Skipper Yannis Lekkas dons his yellow slicker when he expects rough seas while touring the Greek Cyclades Islands.

Greeks eat, about 8 or 9 p.m., and shop each day in the harbor village for fresh bread, feta cheese, vegetables, fruit and wine.

He even cooked omelets and made sliced tomato and cucumber salads for us as we bobbed lazily under the golden Greek sun in a bay the color of a turquoise pendant.

He began by teaching us to sail.

We didn't have to work; Lekkas could have sailed the boat without us — probably a lot easier — but we wanted to learn.

And even though Lekkas spoke perfect English, it wasn't always perfectly clear what he was trying to tell us.

The sails were rigged with color-coded lines, or ropes, and controlled with winches and clamps.



CONTRA COSTA TIMES/KRT

on a chartered sailboat in the Cyclades Islands puts coastal Greek culture within view.

boat heaven

To change direction, the skipper adjusts the angle of the sails through the manipulation of the lines. From his perch behind the helm, Lekkas yelled directions to his rookie crew.

"Liberate the blue one!" he hollered over the noise of the sea. "Huh! Oh, release the clump on the blue line."

"They are confused! Unconfuse them!"

No, we were confused. The lines were tangled.

Fortunately, we weren't forced to walk the plank except when it led to the taverna where we drank wine and ate fried calamari and boiled octopus.

We berthed each night alongside other sailboats — imagine a watery campground for boats — in a harbor that typically faced a row of tavernas. Their proximity proved both a blessing and a curse.

Remember the Swiss sailors who sent us ozo our first night? The men were either sucking up to us in advance or recruiting for their bar medley. They sang until the wee hours of the morning about 200 feet from our bed.

And we couldn't shake them. The Aegean has more than 1,400 islands, and we found ourselves docked with the Swiss three times. To top it off, they

bathed naked each morning from the back of their boat, using an outdoor shower attachment. Singing, as it turns out, is a common event in Greek tavernas. It was only a matter of time before Joe, an accomplished singer and guitarist, added his voice to the tradition.

After a dinner of meatballs and cucumber-tomato salad at an outdoor taverna in Merichas, a Kifissos harbor village, Joe spied a guitar resting on a chair at a nearby table.

"May I?" he asked his Greek owner. It was old and out of tune, but within minutes, Joe was taking requests for American rock 'n' roll from the locals and a table of young Canadian women also on a sailing vacation.

What did they like to hear?

"American Pie," Beach Boys and Bruce Springsteen. "The Boss" they yelled. (Joe loathes the first and doesn't do Bruce. But they liked his Beatles renditions.) The sing-along even led to a romantic encounter for a couple of young, handsome Greek men who sailed the next day with the Canadian ladies. (One of the men sent us a nice e-mail update.)

It may sound as though we did little more than eat and drink, but we found time to explore the islands.

Picture-perfect Mikonos, where

the rich and famous come to party, looks as if it had been constructed in Disneyland.

White, stone-lined streets — narrow and crooked to thwart pirates — are home to chic and expensive shops where jewelry, especially, abounds. Buildings wear traditional colors of deep blue and dazzling white, and boxers hang from the window boxes.

The town beautifully complements Mother Nature's work, the unbelievably blue Aegean Sea. If you've seen only pictures, the water really is that color.

We didn't frequent Mikonos' famed nightclubs, but we did dine with some of the town's renowned avian residents.

A small flock of pelicans have become pets and freely waddle about the town to the unending amusement of the tourists. A few feet from our table, a pelican the size of a first-grader delicately groomed with its long beak the head of a fish-bearing taverna manager.

Despite Mikonos' charm, our most memorable stop was Delos, a barren granite rock about 4 miles long and smothered with archaeological sites that date to the second century B.C.

Cruise ships control the dock so we had to anchor offshore, lower our tiny inflatable dinghy into the choppy water and motor to a narrow beach.



The ruins on the Greek island of Delos transport visitors back in time.

Navigating Internet chartering

Chartering a sailboat in the Greek Isles is a breeze with the help of the Internet.

Many yacht charter companies have Web sites that allow you to view the boats, plan your ports of call, view prices and exchange information via e-mail.

We sealed our charter in less than a week without a single overseas phone call or excessive trips to the post office. If you prefer the old-fashioned route, Fodor's Fifth edition travel guide of Greece also offers an extensive list of outfitters and yacht associations, many with U.S.-based brokers. But exercise caution.

When you board a sailboat, your life could depend on the skill of the skipper and how well the boat has been maintained.

We selected Athens-based Flyt Yachting (www.flyt.gr) after a review of offers from a half dozen companies.

We compared online price quotes, packages and customer reviews and consulted an independent Web site, www.sailingissues.com. Our one-week charter cost \$2,900 plus a \$250 tip for the skipper and minor marina and fuel charges. That sounds expensive until you factor in the cost of hotels,

meals, car rental and ferry tickets.

Sailboat charters come in three basic categories: bareboat, flotilla and crewed.

In a bareboat deal, a person with proven sailing experience may rent a sailboat. It's the most private option because you don't share the boat with strangers. A flotilla charter also requires experience, but you travel with other sailboats, a nice option if you don't feel comfortable going it alone.

We wanted to come and go as we pleased, sleep when we wanted and hang our underwear to dry on the rigging without embarrassment.

Neither of us had sailing experience, so we chose a crewed charter. It included an English-speaking skipper and a 32-foot sailboat with two cabins, two bedrooms. (We could have hired a cook, too, but that seemed a bit much.) If you need a non-smoking skipper, be sure to specify that. Many Greeks smoke.

It's possible to rent a motor yacht, but it will cost you big bucks. Fuel is very expensive in Europe and these boats often have massive engines. The wind, so far, remains free of charge.

— LISA VORDERBRUEGGEN

We began at the museum, which sells an invaluable guidebook to help decipher the acres of carved columns, edifices for the gods and goddesses, tile mosaics and theaters of stone. Excavation has been under way here since 1872, and the museum also showcases some fascinating artifacts, such as its famous stone lions that lined a marketplace from 110 B.C.

If you visit Delos and you have an interest in ancient Greek life, go early. The island closes at 3 p.m., and if you have just one day, you'll need every last minute.

We learned another thing about ourselves on this trip: We like the sailor's life.

On our first day at sea, Lekkas pulled on his lemon yellow slicker as we left the harbor, a sign we would come to know well.

We moved into open water and the famous Aegean winds, called the *meltemi*, blew 30 knots and the swells reached 5 to 6 feet.

The Filyra rose and fell with a great clatter as roaring waves crashed over her bow, sending a cold, salty spray onto our faces.

While we dipped into the trough, we lost sight of the horizon and watched a wall of surging water rise behind us.

Lekkas watched our faces closely. "Are you all right?" he asked.

He later told us that some clients become terrified or horribly seasick.

Not us. We were wearing our anti-seasickness patches, so bring it on.

We may be middle-aged suburbanites today, but tomorrow, we may just buy a boat and go to sea.

E-mail: Contra Costa Times writer Lisa Vorderbruggen at lvorderb@cttimes.com.

Ski Clubs & Events

COMPILED BY KAREN BRADBURY

Stars and Stripes

The following are ski club trip listings through February. To add, correct or update a listing, send information by e-mail to: travel@mailstripes.osd.mil. You also may fax it to (+49) (0) 6155-601-416. If you have questions, call (+49) (0) 6155-601-380.

Base Outdoor Recreation offices also sponsor ski trips; contact them directly for dates and prices. The Tours and Outdoors calendar will return next week.

ITALY

AVIANO SKI CLUB:

www.avianskiclub.com

Telephone 0434 365 185

Trips: Jan. 14-17, Madonna di Campiglio, Italy, \$225; Jan. 28-30, Sella Ronda and Arabba, \$150; Feb. 12-19, Sestriere, Italy, \$695; Feb. 18-19, Lake Bled, Slovenia, \$190.

GERMANY

FRANKFURT INTERNATIONAL SKI CLUB:

www.fiscweb.org

Telephone: 069-9720-3669

E-mail: info@fiscweb.org

Trips: Jan. 7-9, Kitzbühel, Austria, 280 euros; Jan. 14-16, Aletschgebiet, Switzerland, 185 euros; Jan. 14-17, St. Anton, Austria, 275 euros; Jan. 21-23, Davos, Switzerland, 285 euros; Jan. 28-30, Andermatt, Switzerland, 195 euros; Jan. 29, Schwarzwald, Germany, 40 euros; Feb. 4-8, Champoluc, Italy, 425 euros; Feb. 4-6, Adelboden, Switzerland, 255 euros; Feb. 11-13, Villars, Switzerland, 245 euros; Feb. 13-19, St. Velt, Austria, 390 euros; Feb. 18-20, Verbier, Switzerland, 195 euros; Feb. 18-21, Crans-Montana, 265 euros; Feb. 25-27, Zell am See, Austria, 200 euros; Feb. 26-March 5.

GRAFENWÖHR SKI AND SNOWBOARD CLUB

Telephone: DSN 476-1560

E-mail: GRAFSKICLUB@hotmail.com

Trips: Jan. 13-15, St. Johann, Austria, price TBA; Feb. 17-25, Dolomites Kronplatz, Italy, price TBA.

HEIDELBERG INTERNATIONAL SKI CLUB:

www.heidelbergski.com

Telephone: 06202-577-8422

E-mail: president@heidelbergski.com

Trips: Jan. 9-15, St. Veit, Austria, 380 euros; Jan. 14-17, Portes du Soleil, France, 275 euros; Jan. 14-17, Saas Fee, Switzerland, 230 euros; Jan. 28-30, Wengen, Switzerland, 225 euros; Feb. 4-6, Kitzbühel, Austria, 235 euros; Feb. 11-13, Crans Montana, Switzerland, 290 euros; Feb. 18-21, Bad Hölzgerau, Austria, 325 euros; Feb. 18-21, Fims, Austria, 225 euros; Feb. 20-26, St. Velt, Austria, 400 euros.

KAISERSLAUTERN SKI CLUB:

www.geocities.com/kaiserslauternski

Telephone: 06303-4751

E-mail: carpen@msn.com

Trips: Jan. 14-17, Davos, Switzerland, 315 euros; Jan. 28-30, Wilde Kaiser, Austria, 145 euros; Feb. 11-13, Serfaus, Austria, 185 euros; Feb. 17-21, Chamonix, France, 430 euros; Feb. 26-March 5, Trois Vallées, France, 480 euros.

MANNHEIM INTERNATIONAL SKI CLUB:

<http://skiinfo.net/p/10>

Contact: Janet-Anne Boygen

Telephone: 06206-75268

E-mail: boykijanj@hotmail.com

Trips: Jan. 14-17, Portes du Soleil, 195 euros, bed & breakfast; Jan. 21-23, Grindelwald, Switzerland, 125 euros; Jan. 22-29, Kitzbühel, Austria, 330 euros, half-pension; Jan. 28-30, Lech/Zürs/St. Anton, Switzerland, 130 euros; Feb. 4-6, Portes du Soleil, 145 euros; Feb. 18-21, St. Anton, Austria, 180 euros, bed & breakfast; Feb. 25-27.

PATCH SKI CLUB:

www.patchskiclub.org

Area: Stuttgart

Telephone: DSN 430-5789

E-mail: info@psc-ski.org

Trips: Jan. 13-21, Saas Fee, Switzerland, 380 euros; Jan. 14-17, Kitzbühel, Austria, 300 euros; Siegfried-St. Velt, Austria, 390 euros; Jan. 28-30, Zell am See, Austria, 205 euros; Feb. 4-6, Engelberg, Switzerland, 190 euros; Feb. 18-21, Jungfrau, Switzerland, 230 euros.

TANNENBAUM SKI CLUB:

www.tannenbaumskiclub.com

Area: Kaiserslautern Military Community, Eifel, Baumholder, Mannheim regions, Rheinland-Pfalz and Spangdahlem

E-mail contacts: David Hanavan,

dave@tannenbaumskiclub.com

Telephone: 06301-3478

Trips: Jan. 14-17, Chamonix, France, 250 euros; Jan. 21-23, Zell-am-See, Austria, 240 euros; Jan. 14-17, Crans-Montana, Switzerland, 240 euros; Jan. 30-Feb. 5, Siegfried-St. Velt, Austria-Alpen, Austria, prices TBA; Feb. 4-6, Gstaad, Switzerland, 195 euros; Feb. 18-21, Verbier-4 Valleys, Switzerland, 210 euros; Feb. 18-21, Portes du Soleil, France, 245 euros; Feb. 18-21, Bad Gastein, Austria, 235 euros.

WESTPFALZ INTERNATIONAL SKI CLUB:

www.westpfalzskiclub.org

Area: Kaiserslautern

Telephone: 06371-598537

E-mail: kdsowell@interquest.de

Trips: Jan. 2-8, St. Velt, Austria, including ski school; Jan. 14-17, Zermatt, Switzerland, 255 euros; Feb. 18-21, Jungfrau, Switzerland, 230 euros.

WÜRZBURG INTERNATIONAL SKI CLUB:

www.wskiclub.org

Telephone: 06109-1181562

E-mail: wskiclub@hotmail.com

Trips: Jan. 14-17, Dolomites, Italy, 220 euros; Feb. 18-21, Verbier, Switzerland, 220 euros.

Volkmarch

Happy New Year ... in two days!
Die Wanderstrecke ist nicht gestreut.
Die Wanderer werden um besondere Vorsicht gebeten. If you've seen this on your brochure and wondered what it means, here you go: The walking trail is not salted. Walkers should be cautious. With the colder temperatures and snow upon us, please heed the clubs' warning and be careful in 2005. Happy wandering!

Next Thursday, Jan. 6, is Dreikönigstag, the commemoration of the journey of the Three Magi (kings) who took gifts to the baby Jesus. In Germany, it has been tradition in most areas for children dressed as the three kings to go from house to house singing traditional songs and in return receiving gifts of small items or money.

To protect the house, the children would then write the initials of the Three Kings (C+M+B) and the year after the doorway.

If you can, explore the local culture and customs at the volkmarches in the German towns of Burgstall or Gänheim. Or, if you live in Italy, trek off to Vittorio Veneto. If I receive more listings for this special day, with the correct dates and day of the week (always a problem at the beginning of a new year), I'll include them in next week's column.

Notes about this week's events:

- Here's a special note for walkers who live close enough to drive to Luxembourg: Children under 14 will walk for free on Sunday in Leudelange.

- Always keep a flashlight handy for the torch walks, just in case you can't get a torch. The Landsang am Lech, Germany, club's torch walk on Saturday starts from 5 to 7 p.m.; it ends at 10 p.m.

Listings come from brochures of events sanctioned by the Internationaler Volksportverband (International Federation of Popular Sports). These walks are near U.S. military installations. More extensive lists are available at the IVV Web site: www.ivv.org.

Country/Town	Day(s) and Time(s)	Code	Km.	Starting Point	Award	Directional Reference
Denmark						
Stanum	Thu 1300	-	5 & 10	Klubhuset	No award	SW of Hjørring
Germany						
Kernitz	Sun 0700-1300	BFK3	5 & 10	Schreibergallie	B-medal/Beer mug	SAR, W of Saarlands
Landsang am Lech	Sat & Sun 0800-1300	BFK3.5	5 & 10	Weistadttschule	B-medal	SCH, S of Augsburg
Landsang am Lech	Sat 1700-1900	BFK3.5	5 & 10	Weistadttschule	B-medal	SCH, S of Augsburg
Magstadt	Fri & Sat 0730-1330	FCF	5 & 10	Festhalle	Patch	BWS, W of Stuttgart
Nieder-Wiesen	Sat 0800-1400	BCFX	5 & 10	Gemeindezentrum	B-medal	RP, SE of Bad Kreuznach
Ochsenhausen	Sat 1030-1430	FFSY	6 & 10	See misc. notes	Hanging lantern	BWS, NW of Memmingen
Rönkhausen	Sun 0730-1330	BCFX	6, 11, 15	Schützengallie	B-medal	NRW, N of Attendorn
Wiedmannsdorf	Fri 0700-1200	BCFX	5 & 10	Schulturnhalle	Pewter cup	NRW, W of Coburg
Wiesbaden-Delkenheim	Sat & Sun 0800-1400	BCFNFX3	5 & 12	Bürgerhaus	B-medal/Beer mug	HE, Münchener Strasse
Wolferstadt	Thu 0700-1400	F	5 & 11	Bauhof	Porcelain plate	SCH, NW of Ingolstadt
Luxembourg						
Leudelange	Sun 0700-1400	F	5 & 10	Hall des Sports	No award	SW of Luxembourg city
Switzerland						
Zelhen	Thu & Fri 0800-1300	-	5 & 10	Pfarrerheim	Stuffed beaver	S of Waldshut, GE
United Kingdom						
Burton Latimer	Sat 1000	-	5, 10, 20	Wellingborough WMC	No award	SE of Kettering
Llanrhydy Wells	Sat 1100	-	12	Neuadams Hotel	Souvenir	SW of Buth-Wellis
Spitborough	Sun 0930	-	5 & 15	The Boat Inn	No award	W of Doncaster

GENERAL CODES

B - Awards from past events available (B-medal)

C - Bring a cup for free refreshments at the control points

D - Shower/Wash facilities at start point

F - Free refreshment at control points

M - Marathon or long-distance event

N - Nordic walking event

P - Music at start hall

S - Stroller-friendly trails

S - Shorter trail noted as stroller-friendly

T - Evening/Night walk, carry a flashlight

GERMAN STATE/REGION CODES

SHH - Schleswig-Holstein/Hamburg

NDS - Niedersachsen/Berlin

NRW - Nordrhein-Westfalen

RP - Rheinland-Pfalz

HE - Hessen

SAR - Saarland

BWN - Baden-Württemberg Nord

BWS - Baden-Württemberg Süd

TH - Thüringen/Sachsen

FRO - Oberfranken (Upper Franconia)

X - Award available while supply lasts

W - Course suitable for wheelchair

Y - Young-Walkers-Tour or Bambini-Luge event

Z - Reduced price of 3 euros for start card & B-medal

3.5 - 3.50 euros for start card & B-medal

FRM - Mittelfranken (Middle Franconia)

LRN - Unterfranken (Lower Franconia)

SCH - Schwaben

OPF - Oberpfalz

NDB - Niederbayern

MOB - München-Oberbayern

- The Schulzentrum Herrschaftsbühl is the Ochsenhausen, Germany, start location. The 6K Young-Walkers-Tour event will take place only on Saturday; both the 6K and 10K trails are stroller friendly. One final note, the Alleenunterbahn Siegfried will perform Saturday beginning at 11:30 a.m., while the Original

Uhlberg Duo will play and sing on Sunday starting at 10 a.m.

- The Alpin-Pop will play for the Wiesbaden-Delkenheim, Germany, walking crowd on both Saturday and Sunday. The entertainment begins at 11 a.m. Only a 12-kilometer course will be available at this volkmarch.

- The TSV Wolferstadt, Germany, will award its traditional bird of the year (2004) porcelain plate today for completing the SK or 11K marches.

E-mail your comments and Volkmarch information to Jennifer.Wiest@volkmarch.com or mail@volkmarch.com. Write her at: Volkmarch Column, Stars and Stripes, Bldg. 2699, Palsky Barracks, APO AF 92227-3717 (MPS)



alpine snow conditions

as of December 28, 2004 *All measurements in centimeters*

Snow Resort	Sno Base Last Top Bottom	New Snow	Lifts SnowOpen	General Information
Cervinia, IT	12777 12/29	0	1320	Great on piste conditions, dry conditions off piste
Engelberg, SW	7710 12/19	0	925	Best snow found above mid-station
Garmisch-GER	12900 12/20	0	1434	Very good piste conditions, best at top
Hintertux, AUS	10015 12/19	0	1621	Slopes are in great condition. Runs Closed
Kaprun, AUS	11268 12/19	0	1764	Best conditions found at top; Runs Soft
Kauern, AUS	13020 12/20	0	99	Good piste conditions and runs are good
La Plagne, FR	9565 12/19	0	76708	Great skiing on well groomed pistes
Les Deux Alpes, FR	7050 12/19	0	5454	Bray slopes. Runs are closed
Neuschti, AUS	1005 12/18	0	2024	Best conditions can be found on upper slopes
Passo Tonale, IT	22070 12/02	0	1818	Best snow found above mid-station
Pitzel, AUS	11540 12/20	0	777	Top class skiing, very good piste conditions
Saas Fee, SW	19845 12/20	0	1502	Great skiing thanks to the recent snowfalls
Söld, AUS	5050 12/19	0	6691	Plenty of good snow at altitude
Tignes, FR	11760 12/19	0	2050	Lots of powder to be found off piste
Val d'Isère, FR	10095 12/19	0	4397	Great skiing. Runs are good
Val Thonon, FR	8655 12/19	0	2420	Well groomed pistes. Runs, overall: Quite Hard Packed
Zell Am See, AUS	4720 12/18	0	2628	Plenty of good snow on higher slopes
Zermatt, SW	18591 12/19	0	2400	Most pistes in excellent condition. Runs are hard
Tignes, FR	13772 12/19	35	2450	Amazing conditions. Resort runs are excellent
Val d'Isère, FR	5045 12/19	30	3597	Great skiing due to new snow. Resort runs are good
Val Senales, IT	690 11/30	20	712	Snow on the slopes is in beautiful condition
Val Thonon, FR	7543 12/20	30	1430	Improving conditions thanks to the new snow
Zell Am See, AUS	5520 12/18	3	1428	Snow conditions improving. Resort runs are fair

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Outdoor Recreation Ski Schedule

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Pavlovski Bernacki, 489-7751-8631-536-7751
Dec. 30, Jan. 2 New Year's Ski Weekend Garmisch, Germany
Jan. 1 Ski Express, Jungfrau, Switzerland
Jan. 8 Ski Express, St. Anton, Austria

Darmstadt
Schmidt, 489-7751-8631-536-7751
Jan. 1 Skiing & Snowboarding Engelberg, Switzerland

Mannheim
Schmidt, 489-7751-8631-536-7751
Jan. 1 Skiing & Snowboarding Engelberg, Switzerland

Heidelberg
Schmidt, 489-7751-8631-536-7751
Jan. 8 & Jan. 22 Feldberg, Germany

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Let's Go

BY JAYNE TRAENDLY
Stripes Travel researcher

Swiss ice skating

If you enjoy professional ice-skating and rock concerts, you might want to head to Switzerland this February.

"Art on Ice" features some of the most talented ice skaters in the world, international stars with their biggest musical hits and a light show with visual and acoustic effects.

This year's featured musician is Seal. The show will be in Lausanne Feb. 1 and 2 and in Basel on Feb. 3, 4 and 5. Ticket prices range from 62 to 144 Swiss francs (about \$60 to \$125).

For information, go to www.artonice.ch. The site also gives information on the venue, accommodations, cities and tickets.

Hotel brochure

The German Tourist Board is promoting the InterContinental Hotels Group brochure "Städte und Kurzeiten Herbst/Winter 2004/2005" (City and Short trips Autumn/Winter 2004-2005).

It offers short trips with stays in InterContinental, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn and Express by Holiday Inn hotels. For example, a night in the Hamburg Crown Plaza with breakfast starts from 45 euros per person, double occupancy. The Holiday Inn Leipzig City Centre starts at 33 euros per person, double occupancy.

The brochure is free. It's in German, but you can get further information from contact numbers within. For information, contact InterContinental Hotels at (+49) (0) 800/958 00 800 (toll-free in Germany). The mail address is marketing@deutschland.ihg.com. The Web site is www.ihg.com.

Women on the go

Are you a woman who doesn't want to travel alone? You might want to join up with The Women's Travel Club, based in New York. It was founded by Phyllis Stoller, who wanted to find women to travel with when her husband "became a workaholic."

Membership is \$35 a year and entitles you to full details on any trips on the Web site and numerous discounts, newsletters, other travel specials and access to a bulletin board to find fellow travelers.

Members' ages range from 30 to 65, and they are both married and single. Private tours also can be arranged.

For details on trips and membership, go to the Web at www.womenstravelclub.com.

Send items for consideration to travel@mti.strips.com.

COMPILED BY
JAYNE TRAENDLY
Special to Stars and Stripes

Listings are based on the latest information available at press time, but they are subject to change. We recommend checking with the local tourist board to confirm details of the event before traveling.

AUSTRIA

www.austria.info
VIENNA: Flower Ball, Jan. 14; Technologists' Ball, Jan. 14; Econometrics University Ball, Jan. 15; Vienna Philharmonic Ball, Jan. 20; Army officers' Ball, Jan. 21; Pharmacists' Ball, Jan. 22; Engineers' Ball, Jan. 27; Physicians' Ball, Jan. 29; Hunters' Ball, Jan. 31; Opera Ball, Feb. 3; Viennese Coffee House Owners' Ball, Feb. 2; Bonbon Ball, Feb. 4; Lawyers' Ball, Feb. 5; Rudolfs Masked Ball, Feb. 7; Johann Strauss Ball, March 19; VIENNA: Dream on ice, Jan. 21-March 6. Ice skating in front of the City Hall.

BELGIUM

www.visitbelgium.com
BRUSSELS: Brussels on ice, through Jan. 3. Ice shows and skating on Marche aux Poissons square. ANTWERP: Ice skating on market square, through Jan. 8. ANTWERP: Snow and ice sculpture festival, through Jan. 16. THROUGHOUT the country: Anniversary of 175 years of independence, through 2005. BRUSSELS: WALLONIA: Beer 2005, through 2005. BRUSSELS: Antiques show, Jan. 21-30. BINICHE: Carnival, Feb. 6-8.

DENMARK

www.visitdenmark.com
COPENHAGEN: Grand opening of the city's new opera house, Jan. 15.

ENGLAND

www.visitbritain.com
LONDON: New Year's Day parade, Jan. 1. YORK: Stamp and coin fair, Jan. 15-16. Racecourse.

LONDON: Daily Telegraph adventure travel and sports show, Jan. 14-16. Olympia. SPALDING: Motorbike 2005, Jan. 15-16.

LONDON: International music festival, Jan. 15-30. Vivalterance, Jan. 22-23. French travel and lifestyle show in Olympia.

LONDON: Vive Espana, Jan. 28-30. Spanish travel and lifestyle show in Olympia.

LONDON: Motorcycle show, Jan. 29-Feb. 6. Alexandra Palace.

LONDON: Daily Telegraph Destinations: Holiday and Travel Show, Feb. 3-6. Earls Court.

FRANCE

www.francetourism.com
PARIS: Annual winter sales, Jan. 12-Mid-February. DUNKERQUE: Carnival, Jan. 15-26.

MENTON: Lemon festival, Feb. 12-27.

NICE: Carnival, Feb. 12-27. PARIS: City marathon, April 10.

Calendar

Best bets for the week

LONDON: Ring in the New Year with a smashing parade Jan. 1 as England's capital city holds its annual New Year's Day parade. More than 10,000 performers from 20 countries will be marching down the city streets — among them several American high school bands and cheerleaders. Also, for the first time, a colorful float designed by the Carnevale Viareggio in Italy will participate, along with costumed dancers and performers from this colorful celebration.

The parade begins at noon in Parliament Square and continues up Whitehall, around Trafalgar Square and along Piccadilly to Berkeley Square, where it finishes about 3 p.m. The closest Tube stations are

those near Charing Cross Station, Embankment, St. James' Park and Green Park. For more details, go to www.londonparade.co.uk.

ITALY: Children in Christ-mas don't get gifts only at Christmas. On Jan. 6, the Feast of the Epiphany, the old "good" witch Befana comes to their houses and leaves gifts in the socks they've left out the night before. The grownup men in Venice have more fun — about 50 dress up as Befana and have boat races up the Canal Grande from San Toma to a giant Epiphany stocking hanging under the Rialto Bridge. The event starts at about 10 a.m.

— JAYNE TRAENDLY

THROUGHOUT the country: Holy Week, March 20-27. SEVILLE: Spring fair, April 12-17.

SWEDEN

www.visit-sweden.com
KIFJUNK (Norrbotten): Snow festival, Jan. 27-30. JOKKMOKK (Norrbotten): Winter market, Feb. 3-6. Lapp.

SWITZERLAND

www.switzerlandtourism.ch
BASEL: World money fair, Feb. 11-13. GENEVA: International car show, March 3-13.

WALES

www.visitwales.co.uk
LLANWRITTOY WELLS: Roman festival, Jan. 7-9. CARPENT: St. David's Day parade, March 1.

GERMANY

www.germany-tourism.de
MUNICH: International motorcycle show, Jan. 21-23. TODTMOOS: International dog sled races, Jan. 29-30. SINSHEIM: Motorcycle exhibition, Feb. 2-13. Exhibition Center. BERLIN: International motorcycle show, Feb. 4-6. Fairgrounds. KÖLN: Carnival parade, Feb. 7. DUISBURG: Carnival parade, Feb. 7. MAINZ: Carnival parade, Feb. 7. BERLIN: International film festival, Feb. 10-12.

ITALY

www.italiantourism.com
ROME: Navona Christmas market, through Jan. 6. Piazza Navona. VERONA: Christmas cribs in the arena, through Jan. 25. ROME: New Year's Eve on the Piazza del Popolo, Dec. 31-Jan. 1. THROUGHOUT the country: Various Epiphany celebrations, Jan. 6. VENICE: Epiphany witches on the canal, Jan. 6. VIAREGGIO: Carnival, Jan. 29-Feb. 13. VENICE: Carnival, Jan. 28-Feb. 8.

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Istanbul \$ 339up

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ROTTERDAM: International film festival, through Jan. 2.
MAASTRICHT: Winterland Maas-tricht, through Jan. 8. Ice skating on APELDOORN: Midwinter marathon, Jan. 29.
ROTTERDAM: Art Rotterdam, Feb. 23-28. Cruise terminal.
AMSTERDAM: Carnival, Feb. 22-26.
AMSTERDAM: ArtRAI, Feb. 10-20. International car show.
BREDA: Antique show, Feb. 24-27.

SCOTLAND

www.visitscotland.com
GLASGOW: Celtic connections, Jan. 12-24.

LEWISWICK: Up helly aye, Festival of fire and torch-lit parade, Jan. 25. THROUGHOUT the country: Burns Night, Jan. 25.

SPAIN

www.tourspain.co.uk
SAN SEBASTIAN: Tamborrada, Jan. 19-20.

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2004

(AFN-FAMILY)	(AFN-MOVIE)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(AFN-NEWS)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(SPECTATOR)	(AFN-PACIFIC)
9:00 The Wild Thornberrys	Movie "Midwinters" (2001) Dina	Dr. Phil	Jeopardy!	Nightline	College Basketball Alabama	30-Minute Movie
9:30 The Wild Thornberrys	Easy Spacey, Peter Coyote	Dr. Phil	Headline News	Navy/Marine Corps News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
10:00 Challenge Zone	Challenge Zone	(8-24) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
10:30 Challenge Zone	Challenge Zone	(33) Guiding Light	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
11:00 Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius	Movie "Midwinters" (2001) Dina	(17) General Hospital	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
11:30 Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius	Movie "Midwinters" (2001) Dina	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
12:00 Kim Possible: All the News	Kim Possible (C)	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
12:30 Planet's Funniest Animals	Planet's "Beautiful Girls"	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
13:00 Movie "Monsters, Inc."	Movie "Monsters, Inc." (2001)	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
13:30 Movie "Monsters, Inc."	Movie "Monsters, Inc." (2001)	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
14:00 Funniest Home Videos	Funniest Home Videos	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
14:30 Full House "Easy Rider"	Full House "Easy Rider"	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
15:00 Pokemon	Pokemon	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
15:30 Aah! Real Monsters	Aah! Real Monsters	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
16:00 Pokemon	Pokemon	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
16:30 Aah! Real Monsters	Aah! Real Monsters	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
17:00 Rocket Power	Rocket Power	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
17:30 SpongeBob SquarePants	SpongeBob SquarePants	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
18:00 Rugrats Kwanzaa	Rugrats Kwanzaa	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
18:30 That's So Raven	That's So Raven	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
19:00 All That	All That	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
20:00 Ph Heavens "High Anxiety"	Ph Heavens "High Anxiety"	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
21:00 Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
21:30 Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
22:00 The Coolest Show	The Coolest Show	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
22:30 Home Improvement	Home Improvement	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
23:00 Touched by an Angel "Skel"	Touched by an Angel "Skel"	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News
23:30 The Coolest Show	The Coolest Show	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	at Wisconsin. (Taped)	Headline News

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2004

00:00 Aah! Real Monsters	(11:40) Movie "I Wolf" (1994)	(11:30) Late Show	Play With My Sesame	Headline News	(10:30) College Football	Late Night	Play With My Sesame
00:30 Rocket Power	Rocket Power	Access Hollywood	Bear in the Big Blue House	Access Hollywood	Emerald Bowl - Navy vs. New	Late Night	Bear in the Big Blue House
1:00 SpongeBob SquarePants	SpongeBob SquarePants	G's	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
1:30 Rugrats Kwanzaa	Rugrats Kwanzaa	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
2:00 That's So Raven	That's So Raven	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
2:30 All That	All That	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
3:00 Ph Heavens "High Anxiety"	Ph Heavens "High Anxiety"	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
3:30 Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
4:00 Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
4:30 Sesame Street (C)	Sesame Street (C)	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
5:00 Barney & Friends (C)	Barney & Friends (C)	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
6:00 Barney & Friends (C)	Barney & Friends (C)	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
6:30 Barney & Friends (C)	Barney & Friends (C)	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
7:00 Dragon Tales	Dragon Tales	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
7:30 Bob the Builder	Bob the Builder	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
8:00 Rugrats Kwanzaa	Rugrats Kwanzaa	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
8:30 Rugrats Kwanzaa	Rugrats Kwanzaa	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
9:00 Barbie of Swan Lake	Barbie of Swan Lake	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
9:30 Barbie of Swan Lake	Barbie of Swan Lake	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
10:00 The Brady Bunch	The Brady Bunch	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
11:00 The Brady Bunch	The Brady Bunch	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
11:30 The Brady Bunch	The Brady Bunch	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
12:00 The Brady Bunch	The Brady Bunch	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
12:30 The Brady Bunch	The Brady Bunch	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
13:00 The Brady Bunch	The Brady Bunch	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
13:30 Movie "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (1992)	Movie "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (1992)	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
14:00 Movie "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (1992)	Movie "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (1992)	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
14:30 Funniest Home Videos	Funniest Home Videos	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
15:00 Full House "Sisters in Crime"	Full House "Sisters in Crime"	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
15:30 Pokemon	Pokemon	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
16:00 Aah! Real Monsters	Aah! Real Monsters	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
16:30 Rocket Power	Rocket Power	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
17:00 SpongeBob SquarePants	SpongeBob SquarePants	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
17:30 Rugrats Kwanzaa	Rugrats Kwanzaa	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
18:00 Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius	Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
19:00 Dave the Barbarian	Dave the Barbarian	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
20:00 Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius	Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
21:00 Drake & Josh "The Boy"	Drake & Josh "The Boy"	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
21:30 That's So Raven	That's So Raven	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
22:00 Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
22:30 Switched "Will and Matt"	Switched "Will and Matt"	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
23:00 Radio Free Roscoe	Radio Free Roscoe	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
23:30 The Coolest Show "The Brin"	The Coolest Show "The Brin"	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune
24:00 Home Improvement	Home Improvement	(16) Movie "Police Academy"	Wheel of Fortune	NBC Evening News	Carson - Northern Illinois vs.	Sumnerland "Shipping School"	Wheel of Fortune

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FACES

Emmerich judging in Berlin

Roland Emmerich, the director of "Independence Day" and "The Day After Tomorrow," will head the jury at the Berlin Film Festival in February.

Eleven films already have been selected to run in the festival's main competition. They include "The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou," a new comedy from Wes Anderson, and "Les Temps qui changent" (Changing Times), directed by Andre Techine and starring Catherine Deneuve and Gerard Depardieu.

A festival statement last week said Emmerich, a native of Germany, would head the jury that will award the top Golden Bear prize, but gave no details of its other members.

Organizers already have announced that the world premiere of French director Regis Wargnier's "Man to Man," a historical adventure epic that stars Joseph Fiennes and Kristin Scott Thomas, will open the 2005 festival — its 55th edition — on Feb. 10. The event closes Feb. 20.



Emmerich

Jet Li injured in tsunami

Action star Jet Li injured his foot as he protected his daughter from tsunami waves that flooded his hotel in the Maldives, Hong Kong newspapers reported Tuesday.

Li, who played the villain in 1998's "Lethal Weapon 4," was with his daughter in the hotel's lobby Sunday when huge waves gushed into the hotel, the Apple Daily newspaper reported, quoting a friend vacationing with Li.

He slightly injured his foot while picking up his daughter, the report said. Ming Pao Daily News reported Li struck his foot against a floating piece of furniture.

Li made his name in Hong Kong as a martial arts film star before moving on to Hollywood. His screen credits include "Romeo Must Die" and "Hero."



Li

Gayheart steels up for play

Actress Rebecca Gayheart, who gained popularity as the "Noxzema girl" in the skin care company's ads, has joined the cast of "Steel Magnolias," opening on Broadway in April.

Gayheart, 32, appeared on the TV show "Beverly Hills, 90210" in the 1990s, and has recently been seen on the FX series "Nip/Tuck" and Showtime's "Dead Like Me." Her movie credits include "Scream 2" and "Urban Legend." She will play bride-to-be Shelby, the role portrayed by Julia Roberts in the 1989 movie version of Robert Harling's play, it was announced Monday.

Also in the Broadway cast is Delta Burke as Trudy, the owner of a Louisiana beauty parlor, which is where "Steel Magnolias" is set. The production, directed by Joe Mantello, begins preview performances March 15 at the Lyceum Theatre and opens April 4.



Gayheart

'Fat Albert' fears typecasting

Kenan Thompson, who plays the title role in the new "Fat Albert" movie, hopes he doesn't get typecast.

"You always gotta watch yourself when you're playing a kid like an iconic character because you don't want to be trying to audition for something else and all anybody wants to do is 'Hey! Hey! Hey!' ... and kick you out of the audition," Thompson recently told reporters, according to AP Radio.

The live-action film, directed by Joel Zwick, is based on the animated TV series that comedian Bill Cosby created in the 1970s about adolescent boys growing up in Philadelphia. Thompson said he wore a form-fitting fat suit to play the role.

"I had all this belly to get around and a little more fat, but you know it was cool," the 26-year-old actor-comedian said.



Thompson



AP

Flying high again

DiCaprio hits screen with latest epic, 'The Aviator'

BY DAVID GERMAIN

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Leonardo DiCaprio likes to think he and buddy Martin Scorsese share at least some of the obsessive fixations of Howard Hughes, the subject of their latest collaboration, "The Aviator."

■ Living through a mammoth project when it looks like it might capsize, as DiCaprio did with "Titanic," which went on to become the biggest modern blockbuster.

■ Becoming so engrossed in a story it occupies years of your life and requires a massive resurrection of another year, as Scorsese did with "Gangs of New York," which took 25 years to develop and a colossal construction job to re-create 19th-century Manhattan.

"The Aviator" screenplay hooked them from the start, with an early sequence detailing Hughes' fanatic devotion to his World War I film "Hell's Angels," using his own money, Hughes spent \$4 million on the 1930 film, at the time the biggest movie budget ever, and reshot it for sound after deciding the silent era was finished.

"I think Marty and I can both relate to, when we read the script, we both immediately read 'Hell's Angels, year three.' We were like, wow, we know what that's like, being a part of an act that just goes on and on and on," DiCaprio said in an interview with The Associated Press. "Persevering against all the odds and trying to make the best film, being a perfectionist, trying to make the story the best it can be."

"I certainly can't imagine taking things to the level Hughes did in his life. It's too exhausting. The man led 20 different lifestyles in one life."

"The Aviator" casts DiCaprio as Hughes during his "happy years" from the late 1920s to late 1940s, when he fought the Hollywood establishment and pushed bonds on sex and violence in film, dated parades of starlets, and oversaw creation of the world's biggest and fastest planes.

Cate Blanchett co-stars as Katharine Hepburn, whom Hughes dated for three years. Kate Beckinsale plays Ava Gardner, another of his longtime companions.

The film hints at the Hughes of later years, the cloistered multimillionaire with long hair and fingernails, terrified of germs and locked in a hotel room surrounded by tissue boxes.

It's the image of the freakish recluse that DiCaprio, 30, grew up with when it came to Hughes, who died in 1976. Then about eight years ago, DiCaprio read a biography of Hughes and became fascinated with the scope of his achievements and the conflict between his public image as a playboy and daredevil and private life as a man increasingly paralyzed by phobias.

DiCaprio initially developed "The Aviator" with Michael Mann, who decided against directing it after back-to-back film biographies in "Ali" and "The Insider." The actor pitched the script to his "Gangs of New York" director Scorsese, who quickly signed on for "The Aviator."

Like Howard Hughes, who loathed being under the public lens at Hollywood premieres, DiCaprio has learned to live uneasily with tabloid celebrity.

"I hate being bothered by paparazzi. Anyone would," DiCaprio said. "The flip side of that coin, I'm one lucky bastard, and I have nothing to complain about. People are dealing with problems around the world that are infinitely more complicated and much more extreme than anything having to do with a couple of crummy photographers. I'm not one to complain about it too much."

DiCaprio shuns questions about his personal life, tersely denying recent rumors that he split with his girlfriend, Brazilian supermodel Gisele Bündchen.

When it comes to his Oscar prospects on "The Aviator," DiCaprio is more forthcoming than most actors, who tend to insist demurely they never think about awards. After his academy recognition for "What's Eating Gilbert Grape," DiCaprio has been snubbed since, missing out on nominations with "Titanic," "Catch Me If You Can" and "Gangs of New York," films that put his co-stars in the Oscar race.

Does he feel overlooked by his peers come Oscar time? "Mmm, maybe," DiCaprio said. "But you do these films and you throw it out to the public, and it's up everyone else to figure out whether they think it is worthy of something like that or not..."

Ultimately, DiCaprio said his greatest reward is to be part of films that might stand the test of time and bear repeat viewings decades down the line.

"There are certain films out there, that's the reason I get so excited about doing movies, that hopefully I can be part of a film that people 50 years from now will be able to still want to watch. That's what's exciting to me."

OPINION

Some Iraqis defy insurgents to seek peace

BY FRED HIATT

The Washington Post

Returning to Washington from Baghdad this month for home leave gave A. Heather Coyne a shock. In Iraq, as chief representative of the U.S. Institute of Peace, Coyne spends her days working with that country's emerging civil society. Back home, she finds Americans astonished to hear there is an emerging civil society—that Iraqis remain involved with rebuilding their country despite all the explosions and killings.

No, this is not a "good news" story. To the contrary, Coyne's experience confirms the deterioration of conditions in Iraq. She is confined, for security reasons, to Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone. Her Iraqi colleagues for the most part dare not visit her there, because terrorists are always watching those who come and go.

Communication is by phone and e-mail.

Recently the institute held a workshop on conflict resolution in Sulaymaniyah, in the relatively peaceful Kurdish north, because the capital is too dangerous. One participant was a Mosul professor who lectures with 10 armed bodyguards in his classroom.

The insurgents, in other words, are succeeding, not only in killing and wounding Iraqis and Americans but in impeding Iraqis' ability to rebuild their country and to interact with one another and foreigners.

They're blocking precisely the kinds of interaction a society needs to begin recovering from decades of dictatorship. Worse: The violence is exacerbating sectarian tensions, as the insurgents also intend. So far a remark-

able feature of the war has been Kurdish and, especially, Shiite restraint in the face of provocation from Sunni terrorists. But Phebe Marr, a senior fellow at the Institute of Peace who also recently returned from Iraq, says the sectarian-based anger is worse than she's ever seen.

Yet what strikes Coyne is not the bad news—maybe because she's living in the middle of it—but the fortitude and persistence in the face of attacks of the Iraqis she works with. The Mosul professor teaches teaching. One local leader called the day after he had been shot three times—to ask whether the institute had accepted the people he had recommended to take part in a seminar. Another, whose house was torched, got in touch to make sure Coyne had his new telephone number.

"Yes, they complain" about conditions, Coyne said. But she finds a surfeit of Iraqis who still want to learn what the institute has to teach—about how to peacefully manage religious and sectarian conflict, for example—and are willing to drive 11 or 12 hours through multiple dangerous checkpoints to get books and practical advice and lessons from other Iraqis.

To the families of American soldiers who are dying or at risk, there may be little comfort in knowing that Iraqis also are dying and putting themselves at risk. It may help only a bit more to realize that so many of them are committed to making democracy and tolerance work and that their success would be not only the just outcome but in the U.S. national interest, too. Yet the courage of these ordinary Iraqis is extraordinary.

It doesn't mean, of course, that they'll win.



Iraqis Ahmed and Omar, right, check damage done to their neighbor's Baghdad home last week. A mortar had landed the night before, killing one person and injuring another.

The insurgents are testing the will of Americans and Iraqis alike; if U.S. and Iraqi forces cannot provide some measure of safety for election observers and college professors and women's rights campaigners, it won't matter that a majority of Iraqis want the insurgents to fail.

What is remarkable, though, is that despite the mistakes of the U.S. occupation, and despite the ruthlessness and brutality of the terrorists, so many Iraqis continue to stand up on the other side.

Coyne recently interviewed applicants for Fulbright grants, smart Iraqis willing to risk

an association with a U.S. program because they dream of starting an Internet site, or a government watchdog organization, or a public health program. And when they're asked why they take the risk, they invariably answer, "Because it wasn't possible before."

One applicant was a young Kurdish man who graduated at the top of his high school class but, in Saddam Hussein's Iraq, was not permitted to go to university. He is coming forward now, he told Coyne, "because this is my first best chance." She paused and added, "And maybe his last best chance."

Fred Hiatt is editor of The Post's editorial page.

As world advances, Castro off on his own island

BY MARCELA SANCHEZ

The Washington Post

My mom arrived early for Christmas this year, just three weeks ahead of time, in fact. Her visit is something of a holiday ritual, and while it and the nature of mother-daughter dynamics do elicit some tension in our home, I'm grateful she is here. I'm even more thankful when I consider how petty my concerns seem in comparison with those of people who cannot be with loved ones this season, separated as they are by distance, commitments and even by the whims of a tyrant.

Hilda Molina was one of Cuba's leading brain surgeons when she turned against the Cuban government in 1995, accusing it of trying to make a business of selling fetal brain tissue to foreigners suffering from Parkinson's disease. Molina resigned her seat in parliament and her membership in the Communist Party in protest. For nearly a decade, she has vainly requested permission to visit her son and his family in Argentina, which has no travel restrictions to and from Cuba. Gloria Amaya is the mother of Miguel, Ariel and Guido Siger Amaya, three of the now-famous 75 peaceful pro-democracy activists whose arrest and sentencing 20 months ago by the Castro government provoked the ire of the world. The brothers were charged with undermining "the Cuban socio-political project" by running an independent medical facility out of one of their homes. Because they dared treat the poor of a small town in Cuba with drugs manufactured in the United States, Fidel Castro keeps them in jail and their families apart.

There has been no lack of international solidarity shown to those like the Molina and Amaya families. And both the hard-line and what is sometimes called soft diplomatic strategies employed by the international

community have elicited responses from Fidel Castro—but not the kind that have significantly mitigated the plight of Cuban dissidents.

Argentine President Nestor Kirchner would like to believe that a policy of engagement is the way to soften Castro. Early this year, when the United Nations voted to censure Castro for his dreadful human rights record, Argentina abstained.

But when the opportunity came to cash in on the soft approach, Castro did not respond in kind. Despite diplomatic efforts that included a personal letter from Kirchner asking Castro for a simple "humanitarian gesture" to let Molina visit her son and meet her Argentinean grandchildren, Castro refused. According to Molina, an immigration officer told her she couldn't leave Cuba because her "brain is a national patrimony."

Washington rejects soft diplomacy, of course. Those who attempt to engage Castro

run the risk of "humiliating themselves" or appearing "complicit" in Castro's abusive regime, said Roger Noriega, assistant secretary of state for the Western Hemisphere.

If the State Department thought there was a remote chance for a compromise, a U.S. official said last week, it would try it. But Castro leaves the Bush administration no option but the hard line. The result is a virtual stalemate that has put Washington in the unfortunate position of keeping or strengthening harsh policies—including new travel restrictions to the island that also keep families apart this holiday season.

Tragically, this is the nature of policy with a tyrant. Unable to deal substantively with Castro, foreign leaders are constantly pushed to the fringes, so far away from any truly effective interaction or policy-making that what does occur borders on absurdity.

Most recently, Washington and Havana have been engaged in a battle over Christ-

mas lights. The head of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, James Carson, has decked the grounds with a flashy display that includes a snowman, a Santa Claus and a huge number 75, a not-so-subtle reminder of the most recent victims of Castro's repression. Castro retaliated by placing billboards near the Interests Section with images of Abu Ghraib, swastikas and a "Made in the USA" sign.

In the most absurd of outcomes, Argentina opted not to recall its ambassador to Cuba for consultations on the best way to repudiate Castro's inflexibility over Molina. Instead, Kirchner fired the ambassador and the foreign minister's chief of staff.

Molina, Amaya and their loved ones are pawns in a game that Castro has had more than four decades to master. Their stories and the stories of those who intend to help them remind us that there remains within our midst a type of injustice we seem impotent to confront.

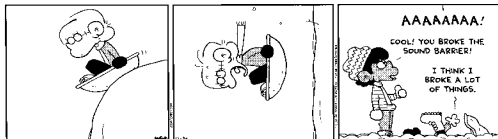
Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



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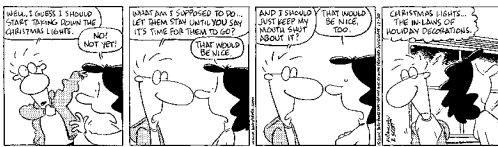
Foxtrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



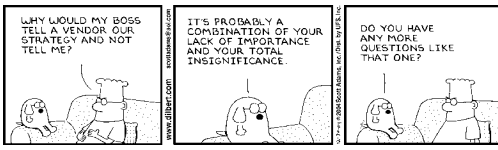
Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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Across

- 1 Helgenberger series
- 4 Palatine Hill site
- 8 Parlor piece
- 12 "2001" computer
- 13 Squared
- 14 2004 hurricane
- 15 INS prey
- 17 Fit in snug
- 18 "— Yankee —"
- 19 Raspy-voiced comedy legend
- 21 Spangle
- 24 Pack away
- 25 "Charlie's Angels" actress
- 26 Gripe constantly
- 28 Threesome
- 32 Dry
- 34 Pod denizen
- 36 Farrell co-star
- 37 Olympian's prize
- 39 Central
- 41 Flea hastily
- 42 Peruke
- 43 4.4 Across, e.g.
- 46 Seinfeld's style
- 50 Clear the tables
- 51 Spheres
- 52 Springfield site
- 56 Missile shelter
- 57 Cole Porter's "Let's see"
- 58 Aussie hopper
- 59 Poutant
- 60 Viewfinders?
- 61 "Uh-huh"

Down

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Actor | 29 Deceptive |
| 2 McBride | 30 Leading man |
| 3 Mule of song | 31 Eada Everage's title |
| 4 Not easily cashed in | 32 Is perceived by |
| 5 Get back | 35 Have a bug |
| 6 Eventual ayes | 38 Cover |
| 6 Pinchloe play | 40 Shortcomings |
| 7 Follow | 43 Lead |
| 8 Oscar winner as Maggio | 45 Get the motor going |
| 9 Microwave | 46 Mediocore |
| 10 In record time | 47 Barbershop request |
| 11 Chip in a chip | 48 Skilled |
| 12 Outback bird | 49 Tactic |
| 20 Snitch | 53 Trygve of U.N. fame |
| 21 Bridge coup | 54 Chit |
| 22 Green land | 55 Bribe |
| 23 Entry on Garfield's agenda | |

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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12-30

CRYPTOUIP

RESH QA GAX DSZZ LAXM
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ESKKVP XKAP CXODIESPO?

C X S H H M A F O P J A !
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF I RAISE SOME
 ALCOHOL UP OVER MY HEAD, HAVE I
 SUCCESSFULLY LIFTED MY SPIRITS?
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals O

Finding love at funeral not rare

Dear Abby: I just finished reading the letter from "J.H. in Yonkers," who fell in love on a friend's funeral. I agree with you, Abby, it's a great story. Mine is similar.

I dated Mike for 2½ years and then we broke up. For eight months I couldn't forget him. On a whim, I called his mom during one of the many Midwest blizzards of 1979. She told me her mother had died and the visitation was the next night. I made it through the snowdrifts to the visitation — the only non-family member because of the weather. Mike invited me to the house afterward.

The next day, I met him in the church parking lot, where he told me guiltily he had whistled all the way to his grandmother's funeral because he knew I'd be there! We knew we were meant to be together and we were convinced his grandmother had a hand in it.

If we can believe that there are

pennies from heaven, we can believe someone was looking out for J.H. and her love, Mike and I will celebrate our 25th anniversary in a few months.

— **Ruth in Rock Island, Ill.**
Dear Ruth: Your letter gave me goose bumps. Thank you for sharing your beautiful story. Read on:

Dear Abby:



Dear Abby: My parents met at a funeral 80 years ago.

My mother, who always hated funerals, went because the deceased had been a close friend of her mother's. After the service, Mom was very impressed by a tall, handsome, older man she met. The rest is history.

— **Esther in Kenmore, N.Y.**
Dear Esther: Which proves that sometimes an ending can be a beginning.

Dear Abby: My father died on Dec. 19 the year I turned 20.

My mother was only 48, and I had four younger brothers and sisters. Our family was devastated that Christmas. All the neighbors knew about it and were very nice to us.

A girl up the street invited my two sisters and me to her birthday party on Jan. 11. She said if we didn't come, she would get us.

The girl who was giving the party had a younger brother, who had asked his best friend, "Jim," to the party. Jim and I started dating that week. We knew by summer that we would marry and were engaged the next year.

On Oct. 22, we celebrated our 27th wedding anniversary.

When people ask how we met, I am not reluctant to tell them. I had never dated anyone before I met Jim — so I say that Jim was sent from heaven to me.

— **Maureen in Toronto**
Dear Maureen: And I believe it.

Letters for this column — with your name, phone number and address — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69404, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at: <http://www.uepress.com/dearabby> Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ECKER

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www.jumble.com

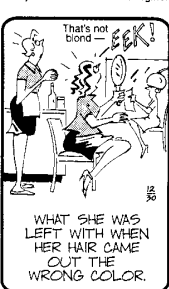
Answer: A □ □ □ □ □ □ □ **A** □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Yesterday's Jumbles: WALTZ EVENT PARDON SPORTY

Answer: She spurned the printer's advances because he — WASN'T HER TYPE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion



WHAT SHE WAS LEFT WITH WHEN HER HAIR CAME OUT THE WRONG COLOR.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Put cluttered keepsakes in storage

Dear Annie: I married my husband, a widower, after we had known each other for five years. I thought I knew what I was getting into, but I was silly.

We are living in the home my husband has been in for over 30 years and his wife he is unlikely ever to leave. Six years ago, his daughter, "Tina," quit school and left home. Her bedroom was as deep in a terrible mess that took me months to clean. Her things now are stored in our house. Also, Tina's mother died 12 years ago, and many of her items were kept for Tina. In fact, nearly all the storage in the house is filled with things belonging either to Tina or her mother. Tina wrote me a letter, saying she did not want any of these things and to give them away.

She is building a small home, and although I'm not sure it will have any space for this mass of items, I am reluctant to assume

Annie's Mailbox



she won't want them in the future. I suspect she will someday change her mind.

I want to get the things that belong to my stepdaughter and her mother out of the house. It annoys me to have them stored in every nook and cranny. We even have his late wife's wedding dress, even though Tina says she never will want it.

Dear Abby: My father died on Dec. 19 the year I turned 20.

I feel like a tenant in this house. Please help.

The Newer Wife
Dear New Wife: You've been quite patient with Tina, but since you are reluctant to part with these things, perhaps you can put them in a storage facility so they are no longer a warehouse. When Tina's house is finished, go through these things again with her. If she still wants nothing, by all means, give her mother's keepsakes to someone in the family who would value them and the rest to a worthy charity.

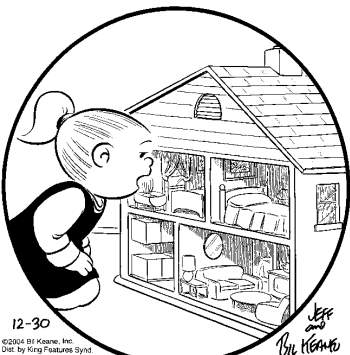
Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Disappointed in the South," complaining about parents who don't come to their children's school functions or pick them up on time. She hit the nail on the head.

My husband is a band director. He always has to stay at least an hour after every event, waiting for parents. His solution is to call the police if the parents are more than 30 minutes late. It certainly has stopped the parents from being late.

— Tired of It
Dear Tired: Don't think the police would be thrilled about this, so we'll make a different suggestion. Parents should be informed that if they are more than 30 minutes late picking up their child from a school event, they will be fined and the money will be used to buy school supplies.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



12-30

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"I wish I had an elf who could get in there and dust."



Dennis the Menace



The Far Side



Non Sequitur



BREX'S REGULATION THAT WE PROBABLY DIDN'T FINISH SECRETARY ENOUGH

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Religious Activities

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Time: 9:30am Coffee and tea fellowship.

General session: 10am - 13:00pm - 13:05 - Lunch

Place of meeting: Wiesbaden Kohlheck, Wenzel-Jakisch Str 2

For further information please contact Roder Giffy:

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Religious Activities 871

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AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—College basketball: Alabama at Wisconsin.

AFN-Sports, 1 p.m.—College football: Alabama Bowl, Ohio St. vs. Oklahoma St. (dtd).

AFN-Sports, 2 p.m.—College football: College GameDay Bowl Special.

AFN-Sports and Radio, 7 p.m.—College football: Continental Tire Bowl, Boston College at Rutgers.

AFN-Sports and Radio, 10:30 p.m.—College football: Emerald Bowl, New Mexico vs. New Mexico.

Friday

AFN-Sports and Radio, 2 a.m.—College football: Holiday Bowl, Texas Tech vs. California.

AFN-Atlantic, 2 a.m.—College basketball: Georgia Tech at Boston College.

AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—College football: Silicon Valley Classic, Northern Illinois vs. Troy.

AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—College basketball: Arizona State vs. Purdue.

AFN-Sports, 1 p.m.—College football: Holiday Bowl, Texas Tech vs. California.

AFN-Sports, 6 p.m.—College football: Sun Bowl, Arizona St. vs. Purdue.

AFN-Sports and Radio, 8:30 p.m.—College football: Liberty Bowl, Louisville vs. Boise St.

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Pro football

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

South

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

North

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

West

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

East

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

South

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

North

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

West

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Monday, Dec. 27

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Tuesday, Dec. 28

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Wednesday, Dec. 29

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Thursday, Dec. 30

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Friday, Dec. 31

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Saturday, Dec. 1

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Sunday, Dec. 2

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Monday, Dec. 3

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Tuesday, Dec. 4

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Wednesday, Dec. 5

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Thursday, Dec. 6

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Friday, Dec. 7

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Saturday, Dec. 8

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Sunday, Dec. 9

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Monday, Dec. 10

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Tuesday, Dec. 11

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Wednesday, Dec. 12

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Thursday, Dec. 13

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Friday, Dec. 14

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Saturday, Dec. 15

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Sunday, Dec. 16

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Monday, Dec. 17

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Monday, Dec. 27

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Tuesday, Dec. 28

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Wednesday, Dec. 29

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Thursday, Dec. 30

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Friday, Dec. 31

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Saturday, Dec. 1

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Sunday, Dec. 2

W	L	Pct	PF	PA
1	0	.000	31	23
2	0	.000	31	23
3	0	.000	31	23
4	0	.000	31	23

Giant-killing Gonzaga strikes, topping No. 3 Oklahoma State

BY JEFF LATZKE
The Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Gonzaga Bulldogs are back in the business of pulling off upsets.

Even with their leading scorer hampered by an ankle injury, the No. 12 Bulldogs beat third-ranked Oklahoma State 78-75 on Tuesday night.

Adam Morrison scored 19 points and J.P. Batista came off the bench for a career-high 18 points as the Bulldogs built a big lead and held off the charging Cowboys down the stretch.

It's the second time this season — and third in 13 months — that Gonzaga upset a team ranked in the Top 3. The team that came out of nowhere to make back-to-back Sweet 16 runs is now showing its might in the regular season.

And this time, the Bulldogs did it with a backup center pushing their offense. Batista, who had

never scored more than 10 points in a game, shot 8-for-9 from the floor to anchor a commanding inside attack. Gonzaga shot 57 percent for the game.

The Bulldogs are 2-1 against Top 5 teams this season. Gonzaga beat then-No. 3 Georgia Tech 85-73 on Dec. 18 and lost to No. 1 Illinois 89-72 on Nov. 27. The Bulldogs beat No. 3 Missouri 87-80 in overtime Dec. 13, 2003.

Batista, a junior college transfer, was pushed into a bigger role when leading scorer Ronny Turiaf was slowed by an ankle injury and got into foul trouble.

"I knew that Ronny was kind of doubtful for tonight and I had to prepare myself mentally to step up at the right times," Batista said.

Gonzaga coach Mark Few said Turiaf's ankle was at about half-strength and he was only using the senior to fill up minutes off the bench. Turiaf, who aver-

aged 20 points in Gonzaga's first 10 games, had 10 points in 18 minutes while others adjusted for his absence.

"I think our guys buy into their roles," Few said. "They understand their roles and they bring what they can bring."

Erroll Knight and Sean Mallon each added 11 points for the Bulldogs, who led by 16 early in the second half, but needed a strong finish to hold off the charging Cowboys.

Oklahoma State (9-1) pushed its way back into it with a 21-8 run that John Lucas III capped with a three-pointer from the left corner to make it 68-62 with 9½ minutes to play. After a 9-2 run by Gonzaga, the Cowboys drew to within a point twice but couldn't take the lead.

"They're just so tough," Few said. "That, more than anything, is what I'm most proud of — we matched their toughness tonight."



Gonzaga's J.P. Batista blocks a shot by Oklahoma State's Joe Graham during No. 12 Gonzaga's 78-75 victory over Tuesday in Oklahoma City.

No. 16 Iowa goes to inside game in victory over Air Force

The Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Facing a team known for its outside shooting, No. 16 Iowa decided to take the ball inside.

The Hawkeyes scored 48 points in the paint and took only six three-pointers Tuesday night in a 73-63 victory over Air Force.

Pierre Pierce led Iowa with 19 points and Greg Brunner scored 17. Pierce missed his only three-point shot and Brunner

didn't attempt any shots from beyond the arc.

The Falcons attempted 36 three-pointers and made 14.

"We thought if we could get them to shoot from 20 feet and we were shooting from two feet, we would have a very good chance of winning," Iowa coach Steve Alford said.

"In a game like this when you're playing the style we've played, I thought it was much

more important that we attack the paint and attack the basket," Alford said.

After leading 29-17 at halftime, the Hawkeyes (11-1) opened the second half with a 17-6 run. Pierce scored seven points during that stretch and gave Iowa a 46-23 lead with a dunk after a steal by Adam Haluska.

Over the next eight minutes the Hawkeyes padded their lead to 61-37 and appeared to be on their way to a comfortable victory with 6:36 to play.

The Falcons (6-5) responded with a 15-1 run. Tim Keller and Jacob Bartschi each hit a three-pointer, and Nick Welch and Antoine Hood contributed four points each.

A basket by Hood with 2:19 left cut Iowa's lead to 62-52. The Hawkeyes held on from there, giving 9-for-10 from the foul line in the final two minutes.

"We hadn't been shooting free throws very well lately, but we

made some big ones down the stretch," said Iowa's Jeff Horner, who finished with only seven points, but was 4-for-4 from the foul line at the end of the game.

Bartschi led Air Force with 19 points, including five three-pointers. Hood added 12, while Keller and Dan Nwaeleke had 11 each.

In the first half, both teams were slow to recover from the long holiday layoff. Iowa hadn't played in a week, while Air Force was back on the court for the first time since Dec. 13.



North Carolina coach Roy Williams argues a call during the second half against North Carolina-Wilmington at the Dean Smith Center in Chapel Hill, N.C. North Carolina defeated Wilmington 96-75.

Tar Heels win 10th straight

The Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — Jawad Williams scored a season-high 25 points and Sean May added 16 as No. 4 North Carolina had no problems after a weeklong layoff, beating N.C.-Wilmington 96-75 on Tuesday night.

North Carolina made its first seven shots — including four three-pointers — and led 19-3 after barely 5½ minutes. Raymond Felton finished with 10 points and 10 assists as the Tar Heels (10-1) won their 10th straight.

Ed Spencer had 19 points for N.C.-Wilmington (5-4), which played without leading scorer John Goldsberry. He injured his right shoulder in the previous game.

No. 7 Syracuse 72, Albany 55: At Syracuse, N.Y., Hakim Warrick had 22 points and 14 rebounds, and Demetris Nichols returned to the lineup with 10 points to lead the Orange (12-1) after missing three games with a sore back.

Nichols had seven points in a 56-second span to give the Orange a 20-point lead over Albany (4-5).

AP Men's Top 25

No. 9 Georgia Tech 92, Lafayette 58: At Atlanta, freshman Anthony Morrow scored a career-high 20 points, including 11 in a late 27-3 surge by Georgia Tech (9-1).

Georgia Tech was leading Lafayette (3-7) 55-47 when Isma'il Muhammad dunked to begin the big spurt with 10:55 left.

No. 11 Connecticut 73, Sacred Heart 55: At Hartford, Conn., Josh Boone scored 16 second-half points and finished with 20 points and 10 rebounds to help Connecticut (7-1) rally after trailing by three at halftime.

The Huskies put together spurts of 12-1 and 14-0 after the break to blow the game open.

Luke Granato led the Pioneers (1-8) with 19 points, but had only five in the second half.

No. 14 Arizona 79, E. Washington 45: At Tucson, Ariz., Channing Frye had 16 points as Arizona advanced to the championship game of the Fiesta Bowl Classic.

The Wildcats (9-2) will play

Richmond, a winner over Butler, for the title Thursday night. Arizona is 38-1 in its holiday tournament.

Paul Buttorac led Eastern Washington (2-9) with 11 points.

No. 17 North Carolina St. 84, Columbia 74: At New York, Camron Bennerman had a career-high 24 points and picked up the slack for foul-plagued Julius Hodge, leading North Carolina State in the Holiday Festival.

Bennerman had seven points in a 14-1 surge that gave the Wolfpack (10-1) a 73-59 lead with 4:17 to play. Hodge scored 22 points despite missing considerable time in the second half.

Jeremiah Boswell scored a career-high 23 points for the Lions (6-3), who were leading 52-50 at one point in the second half.

No. 24 Maryland 112, Liberty 68: At College Park, Md., John Gilchrist scored a season-high 29 points and Nick Caner-Medley had 20 to lead Maryland to its fourth straight victory.

Ebene Ikebeke had 12 rebounds, and freshman James Rest scored 14 points for the Terrapins (8-2). Larry Blair scored 30 points Liberty (1-8), which has lost five straight.

Bowls scoreboard

Tuesday
Iowa St. 17, Miami (Ohio) 13
 Miami 0 7 6 0-13
 Iowa St. 7 3 0 7-17

First Quarter
 IS—Hicks 4 run (Culbertson kick), 4:04.
Second Quarter
 IS—FG Culbertson 23, 12:55.
 MU—Clemens 28 pass from Betts (Parseg-hian kick), 2:25.

Third Quarter
 MU—Smith 7 run (kick failed), 8:12.
Fourth Quarter
 IS—Kock 1 run (Culbertson kick), 10:02.
 4-0, 0:00.

First downs MU 25-18 Iowa St. 19-22
Passing MU 25-40-10-174
 Parseg-hian 20-44-10-275
Run MU 20-44-10-275
Return yards MU 6-4-2 7-75
Fumbles MU 1-0 0-0
Penalties MU 4-48 7-71
Time of possession MU 29:37 30:33

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
Rushing—Miami 9-46; Clemens 8-22; Murphy 1-10; Betts 7-15; Iowa St. 10-10; Hicks 27-159; Meyer 23-122; Kock 3-7; Byrhe 1-6; Davis 1-5; Coleman 1-2; team 3-minutes 6).

Passing—Miami 28-44-10-275; Iowa St. 10-10-0-174.
Receiving—Miami 10-101; Larkin 2-40; Larkin 2-19; Kinkpatrick 2-17; Busing 2-10; 10-10; Coleman 1-2; Davis 1-5; Williams 1-6; Larkin 2-40; Larkin 2-19; Kinkpatrick 2-17; Busing 2-10; 10-10; Coleman 1-2; Davis 1-5; Williams 1-6; Larkin 2-40; Larkin 2-19; Kinkpatrick 2-17; Busing 2-10; 10-10; Coleman 1-2; Davis 1-5; Williams 1-6.

Oregon St. 38, Notre Dame 21
 Notre Dame 0 7 7 7-21
 Oregon St. 14 7 3 14-38

First Quarter
 OSU—Gillett 12 pass from Anderson (Serna kick), 2:24.
 OSU—Newton 11 pass from Anderson (Serna kick), 5:41.

Second Quarter
 OSU—Haines 11 pass from Anderson (Serna kick), 7:49.
 OSU—Favara 31 pass from Quinn (Fitzpatrick kick), 10:56.

Third Quarter
 OSU—Newton 4 pass from Anderson (Serna kick), 12:17.
 OSU—McKnight 18 pass from Quinn (Fitzpatrick kick), 14:52.

Fourth Quarter
 OSU—Newton 2 run (Serna kick), 3:19.
 OSU—Newton 2 run (Serna kick), 3:19.

First downs OSU 33-59 Notre Dame 17-19
Passing OSU 18-33-11-285-0
 Newton 18-33-11-285-0
 Favara 18-33-11-285-0
Run OSU 18-33-11-285-0
 Newton 18-33-11-285-0
Return yards OSU 18-33-11-285-0
 Newton 18-33-11-285-0
Fumbles OSU 18-33-11-285-0
 Newton 18-33-11-285-0
Penalties OSU 18-33-11-285-0
 Newton 18-33-11-285-0
Time of possession OSU 18-33-11-285-0
 Newton 18-33-11-285-0

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
Rushing—Oregon 14-18; Grant 14-19; Quinn 4-16; Wilson 1-9; Anasasio 3-1; Newton 4-18; Wright 2-4; Cole 3-1; team 1-minute 11; Anderson 5-minute 6).

Passing—Oregon 18-33-11-285-0; Grant 14-19; Quinn 4-16; Wilson 1-9; Anasasio 3-1; Newton 4-18; Wright 2-4; Cole 3-1; team 1-minute 11; Anderson 5-minute 6).

Receiving—Oregon 14-18; Grant 14-19; Quinn 4-16; Wilson 1-9; Anasasio 3-1; Newton 4-18; Wright 2-4; Cole 3-1; team 1-minute 11; Anderson 5-minute 6).

Run—Oregon 14-18; Grant 14-19; Quinn 4-16; Wilson 1-9; Anasasio 3-1; Newton 4-18; Wright 2-4; Cole 3-1; team 1-minute 11; Anderson 5-minute 6).

Return yards—Oregon 14-18; Grant 14-19; Quinn 4-16; Wilson 1-9; Anasasio 3-1; Newton 4-18; Wright 2-4; Cole 3-1; team 1-minute 11; Anderson 5-minute 6).

Fumbles—Oregon 14-18; Grant 14-19; Quinn 4-16; Wilson 1-9; Anasasio 3-1; Newton 4-18; Wright 2-4; Cole 3-1; team 1-minute 11; Anderson 5-minute 6).

Penalties—Oregon 14-18; Grant 14-19; Quinn 4-16; Wilson 1-9; Anasasio 3-1; Newton 4-18; Wright 2-4; Cole 3-1; team 1-minute 11; Anderson 5-minute 6).

Time of possession—Oregon 14-18; Grant 14-19; Quinn 4-16; Wilson 1-9; Anasasio 3-1; Newton 4-18; Wright 2-4; Cole 3-1; team 1-minute 11; Anderson 5-minute 6).

Iowa State surge continues with win over Miami (Ohio) in Independence

By Chuck Schoffner

The Associated Press

SHREVEPORT, La. — Steve Hicks burst through holes he had never seen before. Bret Meyer darted and completed just enough passes to keep the defense honest.

Sometime between the end of the regular season and Tuesday night's Independence Bowl, Iowa State rediscovered its running game.

The Cyclones pounded the ball at Miami of Ohio all night in a 17-13 victory that capped an impressive turnaround — from 2-10 in 2003 to 7-5, a share of the Big 12 North title and a bowl championship this year.

"Our goal at the beginning of the season was to be one of the most improved teams in the country," Iowa State coach Dan McCamey said.

"You have to credit that to our kids for not being denied."

They certainly weren't on this night, when Miami came up short in its bid to send coach Terry Hoepfner out with a victory.

Anderson lifts Oregon St. over Notre Dame

QB throws 4 TDs in Insight victory; Irish lose seventh straight bowl

By Bob Baum

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Derek Anderson enhanced his future with a big final game for Oregon State — against a Notre Dame team whose epilogue to the Ty Willingham era was just another loss.

Anderson threw for 358 yards and tied an Insight Bowl record with four touchdown passes Tuesday night in the Beavers' 38-21 victory over the Irish.

The senior quarterback completed 28 of 45 passes with no interceptions in a game that should help his prospects in the NFL Draft. Anderson said he would take the next term off to stay in Arizona and hone his skills.

He plans to play in the Senior Bowl.

"Then we'll see where football takes me from there," he said. "Hopefully, I can continue my career."

The Beavers 7-5 went six of their last seven games because Anderson overcame his reputation for throwing interceptions about as often as he threw for touchdowns.

"If you look at us over the last six or seven weeks, it was just a great, great job of quarterbacking," Oregon State coach Mike Riley said. "I think Derek probably made a lot of money in the last few weeks."

Anderson moved ahead of Steve Stenstrom to No. 2 on the Pac-10 career list with 11,249 yards passing. Only Carson Palmer (11,818) had more.

The Irish (6-6) spoke repeatedly about winning the game for Willingham, fired at the end of the regular season. But Sammie



Oregon State quarterback Derek Anderson was 28-for-45 for 358 yards and four touchdowns in the Beavers' 38-21 victory over Notre Dame in the Insight Bowl on Tuesday night in Phoenix.

Strouther's 52-yard punt return and Derrick Doggett's blocked punt helped Oregon State to an early 21-0 lead.

The short field position the first half just killed us," Notre Dame interim coach Kent Baer said. "The blocked punt and the punt return, you take that away, and it's a much closer game — but that's all part of it."

Brady Quinn threw two touchdown passes as Notre Dame twice cut the lead to 10 points, the last on an 18-yard throw to Rhema McKnight that made it 31-21 with 4:52 left.

son-ending losses, allowing 14 TD passes against Pittsburgh, Southern California and Oregon State.

The Beavers had TD drives of only 2, 4 and 45 yards take their early lead, then went 90 yards in 12 plays midway through the second half after Notre Dame had cut the lead to 24-14. Anderson's 1-yard TD toss to Newton capped the long drive, and it was 31-14 with 12:17 to play.

"That was a big drive," Anderson said. "We were talking on the sidelines and said, 'Let's go answer it.'"

With Willingham ousted, and hired as head coach at Washington, the Irish played under Baer, Notre Dame's defensive coordinator.

New Notre Dame coach Charlie Weis, offensive coordinator for the New England Patriots, takes over the Irish program when his NFL season ends.

"I'd be lying if I told you it didn't affect some people," Quinn said. "You try your best, at least as much as you can, and try not to look too far ahead or too far back."

"I think this team dealt with this situation that we were given as good as any team could."

Baer, who might join Willingham at Washington, said it had been an emotional month for the coaches and the players.

"I think there is a definite bond that has been created over this," he said. "That's a great group of young men in there. I'm very proud of how they played, and I can't say enough about them."

The capacity crowd of 45,917 was the largest since the Insight Bowl moved to Bank One Ballpark six years ago. The roof was open at kickoff, but was closed in the first quarter as a light rain fell.



Iowa State QB Bret Meyer (7) celebrates with teammate Andy Kohler following their 17-13 victory over Miami of Ohio in the Independence Bowl, in Shreveport, La., on Tuesday. Meyer was the offensive MVP.

Texas out to make statement in Rose Bowl

BY RALPH D. RUSSO

The Associated Press

Bowl games often define a team's season.

A victory over a quality opponent to end the season can validate a successful year. Finishing off with a loss in a high-profile matchup can tarnish all that was accomplished to get there.

Several teams playing on the first few days of 2005 have much to prove, but none more than Texas.

The Longhorns meet Big Ten co-champion Michigan on Jan. 1 in the Rose Bowl. Rarely has a 10-win team received so much grief for earning a major bowl bid.

New Year's bowl picks

When the Longhorns slipped into the Bowl Championship Series ahead of California, they became this year's BCS villain. It wasn't necessarily fair, but Texas coach Mack Brown brought much of the criticism on himself by pleading for his team's publicity.

So the Longhorns either can quiet the critics and justify their first BCS bid with a victory, or lose and be dismissed as unworthy of the lofty status.

Brown doesn't believe his lobbying has put any extra burden on the Longhorns.

"Not at all, our team's the fourth-best team in the country based on a combination of things, and I told them I didn't do anything, they deserved it, and they got it because they deserved it," Brown said. "All I did was ask people to look. Really and truly, I feel like we should have been in three of the last four years, and I wish I would have made people more aware then, too."

Texas isn't alone in playing in its reputation.

Wisconsin followed victories in its first nine games with two ugly, lopsided losses.

The Badgers play Georgia in the Outback Bowl on Jan. 1, trying to avoid a three-game losing streak that will make a once-promising season seem like a huge



RB Cedric Benson, left, has rushed for 1,764 yards and 19 touchdowns this season for Texas, which is a much-maligned 10-1 team heading into the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1.

disappointment.

Pittsburgh and West Virginia will be looking to repair the tattered image of the Big East.

The Panthers play Utah in the Fiesta Bowl. The unbeaten Utes are the first team from a non-BCS conference to reach one of the four big-money bowl games, but it's Pitt that comes in as more than a two-touchdown underdog.

"All I can say is, the Big East is a very

competitive conference," said outgoing Pitt coach Walt Harris, who is headed to Stanford.

West Virginia plays Florida State in the Gator Bowl, also trying to snap a two-game losing streak. The Mountaineers entered the season ranked in the top 10 and heavily favored to win the watered-down Big East. Instead, they lost to Boston College and Pitt and had to share the league crown.

The Seminoles (8-3), meanwhile, are

coming off a loss and trying to avoid their third season in four years with at least four losses.

And of course, Auburn will try to complete a perfect season in the Sugar Bowl against Virginia Tech, and give voters in the AP poll an alternative No. 1 to the winner of the Orange Bowl between Southern California and Oklahoma.

"We feel like national champs no matter what the polls say," Auburn All-American cornerback Carlos Rogers said.

"They can't take that away. We don't have to have the recognition from the polls."

The picks:

Saturday, Jan. 1

Cotton Bowl

Tennessee (plus 3) vs. Texas A&M: Vols have lost past two bowl games by combined 57-17. **TENNESSEE 33-28.**

Outback Bowl

Wisconsin (plus 7) vs. Georgia: Bulldogs go for third straight double-digit win season. **GEORGIA 20-14.**

Gator Bowl

Florida State (minus 8) vs. West Virginia: Rematch of 1982 Gator Bowl, won 31-12 by Niles. **FLORIDA STATE 24-10.**

Capital One Bowl

Iowa (plus 6½) vs. LSU: Nick Saban's last game as LSU coach. **LSU 20-17.**

Rose Bowl

Michigan (plus 6) vs. Texas: Wolverines' last Rose Bowl victory was 1998. **MICHIGAN 23-17.**

Fiesta Bowl

Utah (minus 16½) vs. Pittsburgh: Both coaches have new jobs waiting for them. **UTAH 48-28.**

Monday, Jan. 3

Sugar Bowl

Auburn (plus 6½) vs. Virginia Tech: Tigers will try to complete a perfect season. **AUBURN 28-13.**

Tuesday, Jan. 4

Orange Bowl

Southern California (minus 3) vs. Oklahoma: But Trojans look even better against Sooners. **USC 34-21.**

Edwards stakes his claim as Michigan's best receiver

BY LARRY LAGE

The Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — When Braylon Edwards won the Biletnikoff Award as the nation's best receiver, the senior was asked if he thought he was Michigan's best receiver ever.

Edwards said he was.

It's hard to argue with him, though it's difficult to compare him with Anthony Carter because he played more than 20 years ago when Bo Schembechler rarely chose to pass.

Edwards, the first Wolverine to win the Biletnikoff Award, set season school records with 87 receptions for 1,221 yards receiving this year.

With 12 receiving touchdowns for Michigan, his career total of 36 trails Carter's Big Ten record by one. Edwards already has broken Carter's school marks with 242 catches and 3,432 yards receiving.

He also owns Michigan records with three receptions in 37 straight games, an active streak heading into the Rose Bowl against Texas, and 16 100-yard re-

ceiving games. And, he's the first Big Ten player with three 1,000-yard receiving seasons.

"I think my legacy is pretty much complete," Edwards said. "I think I've done everything I wanted to, and we've accomplished everything as a team. The one thing now is to win the Rose Bowl. That would be the finishing touch."

Edwards is blessed with a 6-foot-3, 206-pound body, sprinter's speed and the ability to out-jump defensive backs for the football — or rip it away from them with brute strength.

"He just goes over defenders and grabs touchdowns," Texas safety Phillip Geiggar said. "It looks like a lot of people had him in single coverage. I don't think you can do that."

Michigan State found that out this season.

Edwards caught two TD passes late in the fourth quarter to help Michigan erase a 17-point deficit in just 5:44, and grabbed a third TD in triple overtime to beat the Spartans.

The Longhorns beat Oklahoma's Mark Clayton, the best receiver they faced, to just three receptions for 19 yards this season.

"I think Texas definitely has the ability to match us and play good ball," Edwards said. "It's going to be a good one."

Texas assistant coach Greg Robinson said it will be tough to slow down Edwards because he already looks and plays like a professional receiver.

"He'll walk in the NFL and help somebody right away," Robinson said.

Edwards butted heads with Michigan coach Lloyd Carr in the past because of his loquacious ways, occasional tardiness and a cell phone that rang during a team meeting when he was a freshman, a mistake that still bothers Edwards.

But Carr and Edwards got along just fine this season, and the coach didn't hesitate to praise his star receiver.

"Braylon certainly has had a great career," Carr said.

"I'm extremely proud of what he's done this season and the leadership that he's given our team and the example that he's set on the field. He's certainly one of the great football players we've had at Michigan. I don't think there's any doubt about that."



Michigan senior wide receiver Braylon Edwards, who won the Biletnikoff Award as the nation's best receiver, set school records with 87 receptions and 1,221 yards this season.

Postseason game is a big feat for Buffs

BY JOHN MARSHALL
The Associated Press

BOULDER, Colo. — For a team that sets its sights on Big 12 and national championships, finishing just above .500 and earning a trip to midlevel bowl shouldn't be something to get excited about.

But consider what the Buffaloes have been through this year — sex and recruiting scandals, coach Gary Barnett's suspension, a wild ride through the schedule — and it's easy to understand their satisfaction from a 7-5 season and a spot in the Houston Bowl against Texas-El Paso on Wednesday.

"It has been a rough year for this team and for this program," offensive lineman Sam Wilder said. "Things did not always go the way we wanted them to this year, but this team has kept fighting."

The long offseason threatened to overshadow anything the team might accomplish on the field.

A grand jury investigated claims by nine women who said they were sexually assaulted by players or recruits since 1997. No charges were filed, but three of those women sued the university and two of the suits are still pending.

A separate investigation concluded sex, alcohol and drugs were used as football recruiting tools by player-hosts, though there was no evidence university officials knowingly sanctioned the activity.

Barnett was suspended for three months after making insensitive remarks about two of the women, including former kicker Katie Hnida shortly after she said she was raped by a teammate in 2000.

The school overhauled its recruiting procedures, but the headlines didn't stop once the season started.

Embattled athletic director Dick Tharp resigned in November and chancellor Richard Byyny followed suit earlier this month, though both said it had nothing to do with the scandal. A fraud investigator hired by state prosecutors is also looking into the school's fund-raising practices, including two football camps run by Barnett.

Somewhat, the players were able to fight off the distractions and win games.

"Everybody has gone through a lot, and the smoke has cleared and we're still standing," Barnett said. "In the university, athletic department and administration have had a very successful year — and the football team."



Colorado coach Gary Barnett has been suspended and his team has endured sex and recruiting scandals this year. But the Buffaloes (7-5), who play UTEP in the Houston Bowl on Wednesday, will finish 2004 with a winning record.

It's hard to argue.

Colorado started off the season superbly, winning three straight games for the first time since 1998. That was followed by four losses in five games, seemingly ending Colorado's chances of earning a bowl bid.

But the Buffaloes won three straight games to end the regular season, beating rival Nebraska 26-20 on the road to earn a spot in the Big 12 championship game.

Winning the Big 12 North might have said more about the weakness of the division than Colorado's skill — the Buffaloes were crushed 42-3 by Oklahoma in the title game — but it was quite an accomplishment for a team not given much of a chance to succeed.

"I've never had a young team that has achieved as much as this team has," Barnett said. "If these kids can take this kind of approach when they're older, then they've really got a lot ahead of them."

As for Barnett, his year had nearly as many ups and downs as his team.

Barnett survived his suspension with his job intact after a university investigation, but the pressure didn't let up.

After being praised for holding his team together early in the season, Barnett heard the calls for his job during the midseason slide. It didn't help when Tharp, one of Barnett's biggest supporters, stepped down.

But just when things seemed the worst, Barnett turned his team around and got them into the Big 12 title game and a bowl, earning conference coach of the year honors.

"I really haven't thought about me very much," Barnett said. "In the thrives of the battle, you don't start feeling sorry for yourself. You worry about the people you're responsible for and getting them out of the mess they're in."

Gators, Canes renew rivalry in Peach Bowl

BY MARK LONG
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Dwayne Dixon knows as much as anyone about the Florida-Miami series.

He played for the Gators from 1980-83, splitting four games against the Hurricanes. He was a student assistant for two years following his college career, then returned to become the receivers coach in 1990 and has been there since then.

Now that the once-bitter rivalry has been renewed — the Hurricanes will play the Gators for the fourth time in five seasons Friday night in the Peach Bowl — Dixon believes the in-state rivalries should try to meet more often.

It could happen.

"It really was one of the great rivalries in college football," he said. "And it has a chance to return to that if we get Miami on the schedule. I know that's tough to do, but it would be good for everyone — the fans, the players, the coaches."

Florida athletic director Jeremy Foley and Miami athletic director Paul Dee are awaiting the outcome of proposed legislation that would allow a 12-game schedule each season. If it passes — arguments are expected to be heard in April — the Gators and Hurricanes will play a home-and-home series every few years.

They won't play annually because both programs would like to use the extra game to play other elite teams. But they would resume a heated series that lost some of its luster during the 13-year break.

The Peach Bowl could help, too.

"It means the world to us right now," Miami guard Chris Myers said. "This is our national championship game."

The Florida-Miami series began in 1938 and grew into a rivalry in the early 1950s, when the teams began playing for a wooden canoe. The 9-foot canoe made from a 200-year-old cypress log would be ceremoniously brought out at halftime, displayed on the sideline and then presented to the winning coach.

Because Miami won the final game of a series that was played every year from 1944-1987, the canoe sits in the

school's sports hall of fame. It has been somewhat forgotten.

But memories of the series might never be erased.

There was the infamous "Florida Flop" in 1971 — when Florida defenders laid down and let the Hurricanes score, allowing the Gators to get the ball back and quarterback John Reeves to break Jim Plunkett's record for NCAA career passing yards.

Miami coach Fran Curci refused to shake hands with Florida coach Doug Dickey after the game. Making matters worse, several Gators headed to the East end zone of the Orange Bowl and jumped into a pool that housed Miami Dolphins mascot Flipper during NFL games of the Hurricanes for years.

The rivalry grew even more intense in 1980, when Florida fans — angry that the Gators trailed Miami 28-7 late in Gainesville — threw peaches at the Hurricanes, who were headed to the Peach Bowl.

Miami coach Howard Schnellenberger was so furious he ordered a field goal to add to the final margin.

For the Gators, the game never hit the heights of other Southeastern Conference rivalries such as Auburn, Georgia and Tennessee — or reached the crossroads of the annual meeting with Florida State.

So Florida dropped the Hurricanes in 1988 because it wanted to play a "more national schedule," then promptly replaced them with Montana State. Miami fans accused the Gators of pulling out because the Hurricanes were dominating them — on field and on the national scene.

With Florida's recruiting efforts suffering in talent-rich Dade County, former coach Steve Spurrier wanted the Hurricanes back on the schedule in 1990. But with the SEC expanding, there was no room.

After 13 years, Florida and Miami renewed the rivalry in the 2001 Sugar Bowl. Just a few nights before Miami's 37-20 win, a handful of players from both teams — most notably Miami's Bryant McKinnie and Florida's Alex Brown — mixed it up on Bourbon Street.

The series took another turn last season, when Brock Berlin rallied the Hurricanes from a 23-point, third-quarter deficit to a 38-33 victory.

NFL Hall of Fame
Challenge

STARS AND STRIPES

OCONUS .com

Top Scores for Week 16

Best Overall Scores

256
252
250
248
248
248
246
244
242

yahtzee
768-SAF-T
davidleshire
derek40
BigRedOneAMLO
chris0269
PilgrimPride
bankonthebus
BIG DRE
Razorbacks

Misawa AB, Japan
Camp Henry
Wiesbaden
1st Infantry Division
Leighton Barracks
HHC 121 Signal
Yokosuka
unit 20239
DYNCORP
B6 msg/qpa

2828
2812
2810
2808
2796
2782
2774
2774
2772
2766

Jack58
Joe Corleone
giants#1
Who Cares
STEELFROGWOOD
Bone-Daddy
Jaguar One
SPIELMEISTER 04
cowboy48
PigmyPride

422 ABS RAF Croughton
Misawa
hbc 2/37 ar
MNF-1 DCSPER
HQ-12
MAG, USAREUR, G2
DoDDs
Hohenfels
Rein Main AB
Yokosuka

See websites for official game rules.

Check this space every Thursday during the entire NFL season for the weeks Top Scores and Best Overall Scores during the NFL Challenge.

New Syracuse AD fires Pasquaoni

The Associated Press

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Syracuse University fired embattled head football coach Paul Pasquaoni on Wednesday, just three weeks after giving him a vote of confidence to return for a 15th season.

Pasquaoni, 57, 39-1 and 6-3 in bowl games at Syracuse. But the Orange struggled to break even the past three years after going 10-3 and finishing 14th in the nation in 2001.

Outgoing athletic director Jake Crouthamel, who hired Pasquaoni to replace Dick MacPherson, gave his embattled head coach a positive evaluation after the Orange upset then-No. 17 Boston College in the season finale. That vaulted Syracuse into a four-way tie for the Big East championship and made the Orange eligible to play in the postseason.

Chancellor Nancy Cantor announced Dec. 6 that Pasquaoni would return for 2005, but 11 days later the university hired Daryl Gross as its athletic director and the Orange's humbling 51-41 loss to Georgia Tech in the Champs Sports Bowl apparently sealed Pasquaoni's fate.

The decision to fire Pasquaoni was made by Gross.

Petrino speaks with LSU

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Louisville football coach Bobby Petrino has met with LSU officials to discuss the Tigers' job but refused to say if he expected further talks.

"There's no offer on the table," he said Tuesday.

College football briefs

The LSU job opened when Nick Saban left for the Miami Dolphins.

called his meeting with LSU a "preliminary session," is in Memphis, where the No. 7 Cardinals play, No. 10 Boise State in the Liberty Bowl on Friday.

LSU officials received permission from Arkansas to talk to Razorbacks coach Houston Nutt, an Arkansas spokesman said Tuesday.

Police: Vandy football player killed over 'trash talk'

TAMPA, Fla. — Vanderbilt running back Kwane Doster was shot to death after his friends and a group of other men exchanged "trash talk" about their cars, Tampa police said Tuesday.

Police continued to appeal for help in making an arrest in the Sunday morning shooting. Police said they have suspects, but need witnesses who might have seen who fired the fatal shot.

Doster, 21, was shot to death at a sandwich shop after visiting a local club with two friends about 1:30 a.m. Sunday.

While leaving the club, Doster's friends had a discussion with three other men about their cars, said Tampa police spokesman Joe Durkin. Both groups were driving what Durkin described as "show" cars, and the arguments centered on whose car was better.

Paul Pasquaoni

The two groups met again at a stadium, where they again exchanged words and mean stares, Durkin said. The suspects were riding in an orange Infiniti.

Blocks later, Doster and his friends pulled into a sandwich shop. The Infiniti pulled up, one man got out and opened fire with a handgun, Durkin said.

Doster, who was sitting in the back seat of his friend's car, was killed with a single shot. No one else was injured.

San Jose State hires Tomey

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Dick Tomey, the career leader in coaching victories at Arizona and Hawaii, has been hired to revive San Jose State's struggling football program.

A school source, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed Wednesday that Tomey was chosen to succeed Fitz Hill, who resigned earlier in the month after four losing seasons.

The 66-year-old Tomey currently is the assistant head coach at Texas under Mack Brown, helping to prepare the team for Saturday's Rose Bowl. The Longhorns declined comment through a spokesperson.

'Monday Night Football' has lowest ratings ever

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The new national rating for "Monday Night Football" this season was the lowest in the ABC program's 35 years, though it still ranked among the top 10 prime-time shows for the 15th straight season.

The season average of an 11.0 rating dipped below 2003's 11.4 rating for the lowest ever. It was down 4 percent from last year's 11.5 average, which was the first year since 1994 that the average rating for "MNF" had not dropped. The program ranked seventh in prime time and continued to perform extremely well with male viewers.

"The only thing that matters is beating your competition right now," ABC Sports spokesman Mark Mandel said. "It's doing what it's intended to do and that's beat its competition."

This season was certainly eventful for "Monday Night Football," which drew criticism from the NFL for a steamy opening segment last month with actress Nicole Sheridan, from ABC's "Desperate Housewives," jumping into the arms of Eagles receiver Tiki Barber.

"Monday Night Football" is heading into the final year of its contract with the NFL. The exclusive negotiating period for ABC and its broadcast partner ESPN, which has the Sunday night game rights for nearly another year. But there's been speculation that other networks might challenge for the Sunday night and Monday night packages.

NFL Briefs

NFL injury update

Injuries to prominent NFL players followed by team's prognosis. (See Friday's edition for injury report provided by the league.)

Cowboys: RB Richie Anderson (neck) out for Sunday.
Steelers: CB DeShaun Townsend (hand) out Sunday; RB Jerome Bettis (ankle), quarterback LB Clinton Portis (groin) doubtful; RB Clinton Portis (ankle), tight end LB Clinton Portis (ankle) questionable; LB Kendrick Bell (groin) questionable.

Last month, the NFL agreed to \$8 billion in extensions with Fox and CBS to televise Sunday afternoon games for six more years. The deals also would allow the networks to show extra matchups late in the season in prime time.

Broncos put RB Hearst on injured reserve

DENVER — The Denver Broncos placed running back Garrison Hearst on injured reserve Tuesday with a broken left hand.

Hearst, a 12-year veteran, two-time Pro Bowler and 2001 NFL Comeback Player of the Year, was signed as a free agent in the offseason. He played before the Broncos with the Dallas Cowboys and the San Francisco 49ers, and finished the season with 20 carries for 81 yards.

To replace Hearst, the Broncos signed Johnathan Reese, who was with the New York Jets before the season. Reese played at Columbia University in New York and was on the Jets' practice squad for most of the 2003 season.

Judge refuses to dismiss charges in BALCO case

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The judge in a steroids distribution case that has implicated several elite athletes refused Tuesday to dismiss charges against three defendants, but ruled they may argue that statements given to investigators were illegally coerced.

The statements implicated several sports stars as drug users — including baseball sluggers Barry Bonds, Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield, and sprinters Marion Jones and Tim Montgomery. No athlete has been charged.

Judge Susan Illston said there's a substantial dispute between prosecutors and the three accused men — Victor Conte, James Valente and Greg Anderson — over whether they were in custody when they were initially interrogated by investigators.

The questioning took place during the 2003 BALCO Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative — the lab headed by Conte — and the home of Anderson, Bonds' personal trainer. Valente is a lab vice president. A fourth defendant, coach Robert Korchennyy, was not involved in Tuesday's ruling.

If the judge finds the men were

Sports briefs

under arrest during the raids, as the defendants allege, then defense attorneys would not be able to use the statements against them.

Prosecutors argue the defendants were not to leave during the questioning.

In court papers last month, an Internal Revenue Service agent wrote that during the laboratory raid, "Conte openly acknowledged giving testosterone-based cream, itself a steroid, to numerous professional athletes and specifically identified the names of the specific athletes to whom he had given drugs." An IRS memo about that conversation listed Bonds, Giambi, Sheffield, Jones, Montgomery and others.

These and other athletes testified last year before the federal grand jury that indicted the four men.

Yankes finalize \$21 million deal with Wright

NEW YORK — Free agent Jaret Wright and the New York Yankees finalized a \$21 million,

three-year contract Wednesday, announcing the deal on the pitcher's 29th birthday.

Wright and the Yankees reached a preliminary agreement Dec. 7.

Since losing to Boston in the AL championship series, New York also has added free-agent pitcher Carl Pavano to the rotation and tried to work out a trade for Arizona ace Randy Johnson.

Wright was 15-8 with a 3.28 ERA for Atlanta last season, then lost both of his starts in the first round of the playoffs against Houston. The right-hander is 52-45 with a 5.09 ERA in a career that began in 1997 with Cleveland and nearly ended because of shoulder trouble.

Ray sues NHLPA, seeking lockout compensation

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Veteran tough guy Rob Ray sued the NHL Players Association, claiming he has been shut out of the union's lockout compensation fund as punishment because he said in October he would return to the ice if the NHL used replacement players.

Ray spent most of last season working as a TV broadcaster with

his former team, the Buffalo Sabres, before signing with Ottawa in February. He played six games with the Senators, and was on the team's roster when it was eliminated by Toronto in the first round of last year's playoffs.

The 35-year-old Ray, a veteran, is an unrestricted free agent. He said Tuesday he was notified early last month that an NHLPA committee ruled he was not eligible for compensation.

NHLPA spokesman Jonathan Weatherdon declined comment Tuesday on Ray's suit, which was filed in New York Supreme Court in Buffalo.

The lockout entered its 104th day on Tuesday. Last month, the NHLPA began paying players \$10,000 a month while they are out of work.

Vazquez beats Simonyan to retain IBF feather title

EL CAJON, Calif. — Israel Vazquez handed top-ranked contender Artyom Simonyan his first defeat and retained his IBF junior welterweight championship with a fifth-round knockout Tuesday night.

Vazquez is 37-3 with 28 knockouts. Simonyan slipped to 14-1-1

with seven KOs.

Austrian downhill Grugger gets first World Cup win

BORMIO, Italy — Austrian downhill Johann Grugger won his first World Cup race Wednesday in the course that will host the upcoming world championships, while overall Cup leader Bode Miller came in 14th.

Grugger finished in 1 minute, 55.7 seconds on the Stevia, one of the most physically demanding courses on the World Cup circuit.

Austrian Michael Walchhofer, the reigning downhill world champion, was 0.24 seconds behind in second and countryman Fritz Strobl, the Olympic gold medalist, was third.

Also Wednesday, in Semmering, Austria, Markus Schild won for the second time in as many days, capturing a night slalom to go along with her World Cup slalom victory on Tuesday.

Schild won in a combined time of 1 minute, 35.49 seconds to the delight of 15,000 fellow Austrians on the Hirschenkogel course.

Schild beat Croat Janica Kostelic by 1.04 seconds, who was followed by overall World Cup leader Tanja Poutiainen of Finland in third.

Bailey's big test features meeting with Manning

BY EDDIE PELLIS

The Associated Press

DENVER — A humiliating loss to Indianapolis in the playoffs last season made it clear the Denver Broncos had to change something.

That change is Manning No. 24 this season, and his name is Champ Bailey.

On Sunday, the Broncos play the Colts again in a game they need to win to make it back to the playoffs. It may also serve as the definitive test on whether Denver really got what it needed when it traded star tailback Clinton Portis for the shutdown cornerback.

"I wasn't here last year, and what happened last year doesn't concern me," said Bailey, who has consistently shirked discussion of who won and lost in the trade. "All I know is what we've got ahead of us. All I can worry about is what we've got to do to win this week."

Bailey's impact has been largely debated in Denver and around the league this season.

He has three interceptions — not a high number for a cornerback — and the Broncos pass defense has stayed steady, ranked sixth in the league this year and last.

But almost everyone agrees statistics don't tell the entire story with a cornerback, especially a "shutdown" corner like Bailey, who doesn't get the ball thrown his way as much as most corners.

Bailey made his fifth straight Pro Bowl and started every game.

He was most visible when he got beat, and that happened on more than a few occasions — by Cincinnati's Chad Johnson, by Oakland's Jerry Porter, and by Kansas City's Eddie Kennison.

For the most part, though, he has done his job, limiting quarterbacks' choices by shutting off one side of the field. He has also been an exceptional run defender, something many top corners aren't known for.

"Obviously, Champ Bailey is a guy who can cover any number of guys," Colts quarterback Peyton Manning said. "He can play in the slot. He follows the best receivers."

Meanwhile, Portis has run for 1,315 yards and five touchdowns for Washington. The Broncos have found adequate replacements in Reuben Droughns and Tatum Bell, who was selected with the second-round draft pick the Broncos also received in the trade.

But Denver has struggled on third-and-short situations this season and ranks 30th in the league in scoring touchdowns inside the opponent's 20-yard line. Portis ran for 14 scores last year, and some wonder if his absence has left Denver's offense in a lull.

The bottom line is wins and losses, and the Broncos are 9-6. A win over Indianapolis would give them 10 wins — matching last year's total — and a first-round playoff game on the road, just like last year.

The Broncos finished with the fourth-ranked de-



Denver's Champ Bailey (24), defending San Diego's Eric Parker, has three interceptions this season but has been an effective shutdown cornerback. Bailey and a second-round draft pick were traded to Denver in the offseason for running back Clinton Portis.

fense last season, but the good numbers didn't hide the flaws, most of which came to the surface in the 41-10 playoff loss at Indianapolis.

Manning threw for 377 yards and five touchdowns. The most embarrassing moment came early, when Al Wilson, Kenyon Kennedy, Kelly Herndon and Lenny Walle watched Marvin Harrison make a catch and all fall to the ground, but never touched him. Harrison stood up and ran for a touchdown and a 1-4 lead.

"We weren't up to that game, I don't know why," Kennedy said. "We didn't play well in that last game and it was worse because it was the playoffs."

Since the Colts have clinched the third seed in the AFC and Manning threw his 49th touchdown last week to set the NFL record, Indy coach Tony Dungy may get his chance against Manning and the starters won't play the entire game Sunday.

If the Broncos win, they could travel to Indy for a rematch next week in the first round of the playoffs. One way or another, it seems Bailey is destined to get his chance against Manning.

"He's done things you can only imagine a quarterback doing," Bailey said. "One of his goals was to throw for 40 touchdowns and he did that a few weeks ago. That's amazing."

NFL statistics

AFC Individual leaders

Week 13

Quarterbacks

Passing

Yards

TDs

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Rating

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NFC Individual leaders

Week 13

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Passing

Yards

TDs

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Case: Defense, kicking game favor Pats

CASE, FROM BACK PAGE

and wins and wins, with poise, intelligence and resourcefulness.

Brady reads defenses as well as any quarterback, and if an opponent doesn't get pressure on him, he becomes a surgeon.

■ The defense devised by coach Bill Belichick and coordinator Romeo Crennel is complex, and it keeps evolving. Yet the players have such a strong grasp of it that they rarely make mistakes. All the while they are befuddling opponents the way they did Jets quarterback Chad Pennington last Sunday.

The key defenders are linebackers Mike Brady, Ted Bruschi and Ted Johnson, and linemen

Seymour and Willie McGinest. Their versatility and command of the intricate scheme allows Belichick's defense to spring surprises on offenses.

■ Adam Vinatieri doesn't miss big kicks. He's having another superb season and with two Super Bowl-winning kicks in his résumé, does anyone think he won't come through when needed?

What the Patriots have achieved this year is just as impressive as their accomplishments in 2001 or 2003 because of the epidemic of injuries and a difficult schedule.

Super Bowl will be exceptionally difficult because the four best teams in the league are in the

AFC now that Eagles receiver Terrell Owens is sidelined. New England might have to beat Manning and the high-powered Colts and then the rugged Steelers just to get to the Super Bowl. Or the very worthy Chargers could sneak into the AFC championship game.

■ But New England has frustrated Manning and the Colts in their past two meetings, both in Foxborough, where the next one would occur.

A trip to Pittsburgh in the AFC title game was the route they took in 2001.

"If you play with what you've got," Brady said, "and teams that deal with it and come through are the best teams."

Until proven otherwise, that's the Patriots.

Team statistics

OFFENSE

Team	Yards	Runs	Pass
Indianapolis	416	147	269
Kansas City	391	143	250
New England	354	107	226
San Diego	362	125	235
Tennessee	340	118	222
San Francisco	337	121	217
Pittsburgh	328	153	174
Denver	319	124	195
Oakland	324	175	149
San Diego	324	175	149
Jacksonville	317	117	200
Buffalo	305	115	190
San Diego	291	103	172
Miami	276	128	148
Baltimore	269	119	150

DEFENSE

Team	Yards	Runs	Pass
Pittsburgh	257	80	177
San Diego	264	107	157
Denver	283	98	185
New York Jets	282	121	161
Baltimore	297	105	192
San Diego	303	108	195
New England	322	108	214
Jacksonville	322	108	214
Cleveland	331	145	186
San Diego	342	121	221
Houston	336	117	219
Minnesota	336	117	219
Indianapolis	361	121	240
Kansas City	378	127	251
Oakland	378	127	251

Team statistics

OFFENSE

Team	Yards	Runs	Pass
Atlanta	371	129	242
Minnesota	367	123	244
Green Bay	359	101	258
Seattle	358	141	217
San Francisco	357	104	253

SPORTS



In New Year's Day bowls, sixth-ranked Texas has plenty at stake, Page 44

A case for the defense

Experienced, playmaking Pats poised to repeat

BY BARRY WILNER
The Associated Press

They don't have the league's best record and they won't have home-field advantage throughout the playoffs.

Their secondary is banged up so badly that an undrafted rookie, a linebacker and a wide receiver have played significant roles in recent games. There are concerns about a no-name offensive line, and their best defensive lineman, Richard Seymour, injured his foot on Sunday.

Are the New England Patriots done? Hardly.

Indeed, the Patriots are in better shape offensively to win the Super Bowl than they were last season. And with all the adversity on defense, they've discovered that nearly every lineman and linebacker and back on the roster can contribute.

"Guys make plays," says strong safety Rodney Harrison, the glue of defense. "There is more focus on what they have to do when they get on the field. They look around and see how everyone is making plays and they do it, too."

They did it against the Jets last weekend to secure a first-week bye, which they'll need to heal. And that victory came after an uncharacteristic meltdown in Miami the previous Monday — a loss that cost them a shot to stay in Foxboro for the entire AFC playoffs, unless Pittsburgh loses its first postseason game.

"This is a team with a lot of mental toughness that battles and has a lot of strong character," quarterback Tom Brady said, "and when you have that, you can feel proud at the end of the day."

The Patriots have felt proud while carrying the Vince Lombardi Trophy two of the past three years. They not only are capable of doing it again, but should be considered nothing less than co-favorites with the Steelers.

Here's why:

■ Corey Dillon gives New England a running threat it hasn't had since Curtis Martin left for the Jets in 1998. Sure, Antowain



Corey Dillon (28), who has rushed for a team-record 1,519 yards this season, has given New England the dependable running game it has lacked in recent seasons, diversifying the team's potent offense.



Adam Vinatieri (4) has made two last-second, game-winning kicks in the Super Bowl, has made 31 of 33 field goal attempts this season and has converted 84 percent of his field goals the past four seasons (107 of 127).

Smith was a key contributor in the two Super Bowl wins, but with Dillon the Patriots can play any style on offense. Dillon, who has set a team record with 1,519 yards rushing, is powerful and has a burst. He's also a workhorse.

■ Brady's receiving corps is



Fifth-year pro Tom Brady continues to enhance his reputation as a winner who picks apart defenses. Since becoming a starter in 2001, he has averaged 3,425 passing yards and 23.7 touchdown passes per season.

even deeper than last year. One week, he'll turn to veteran Troy Brown — when Brown is not spending most of his time as a fill-in cornerback. Another week, it's Deion Branch. Or David Givens. Or one of the tight ends.

"It doesn't really matter which

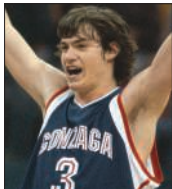


Patriots head coach Bill Belichick is the architect of a defense that ranked first in the NFL in points allowed last season (14.9 per game) and is sixth this year (16.9) despite a rash of injuries that has sidelined several starters.

one is in there, I have confidence in all of them," Brady says. "They're all playmakers."

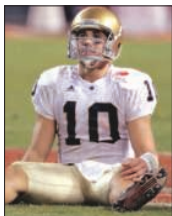
■ So is Brady, who never will pile up the kind of numbers Peyton Manning or Daunte Culpepper have this year. But he wins

SEE CASE ON PAGE 47



Upset specialist Gonzaga topples third-ranked Oklahoma State

Page 42



Oregon State extends Notre Dame's bowl-game losing streak to seven

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Spurs, Sixers defeat league heavyweights Suns and Sonics

Page 41

After 14 seasons, Syracuse fires Pasqualoni Page 46

